

**Town of Garner
Community Information Meeting
NC Turnpike Authority: Plans for 540
November 17, 2010 7:00pm
Garner Historic Auditorium**

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

Good evening. Thank you for being here. Let me welcome you to the Garner Historic Auditorium. First I'm gonna call on Council Member Jackie Johns for an invocation.

Council Member Jackie Johns:

Good evening. It's a great day to be here too isn't it. God is good. Let us pray. Eternal God our heavenly Father, it is again that we come before you with open arms and grateful hearts, thanking you for all the blessing that thou has blessed us with, not because we have been good but because you have looked beyond all of our shortcomings and you gave us another chance to call upon your name. And Father as we come into this place this afternoon we pray a special blessing that first of all that you are gonna be in the midst of this meeting. And Father we ask that whatever we do or say that we will do it in love and joy and to keep peace. We know Father that there are heavy hearts here on this occasion. Some don't understand and some don't want to understand, but they're still here, but Father and keep us in tune with your love and your caring. Bless all of those who have come this way. Watch over them and protect them. And Father whatever we speak we will speak it from our hearts. Bless us and make us a blessing. Bless Garner as a whole. Bless this country. Bless all those who are leading us that will be in this position tonight to say things that will be a helper to the Town of Garner for today, tomorrow, and for years to come. Father bless us and we shall be so ever careful to give your name the praise. This we offer into your name we pray. Amen.

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

Thank you, Jackie. I'm gonna pass this mic and ask the ones who are here if you're an elected official part of the program or a town staff member please introduce yourself.

Lindy Brown, Wake County Board of Commissioner Representative:

Good evening, for those that do not know me, I'm Lindy Brown, Wake County Board of Commissioner Representative, District Two and I come and bring you greetings on behalf of the Wake County Board of Commissioners. But more importantly, I come to let you know that the board of commissioners actually adopted the original corridor route on October 18, 2010 and I want to... **(Audience Applause)** Thank you. I would like to take the opportunity at this time and read the resolution that we passed. A resolution by the County of Wake County regarding the triangle expressway southeast extension.

Whereas: the proposed triangle expressway southeast extension has been a fundamental transportation facility under pending for more than twenty years of local land use and transportation decision for Wake County and other local government of Wake County. Whereas: Wake County historically has been utilized the protective corridor proposed in earlier design to make key planning decision for both existing and future development in Wake County. And whereas: the proposed alternative alignment to relocate the corridor away from its previous designation and protective route will have an adverse impact on the committee in Wake County. And I want to emphasize, adverse impact. **(Audience Applause)** Whereas: the proposed alternative alignment illustrated as the blue, purple, and red on the North Carolina Turnpike Authority maps will have a greater impact on Wake County designated priority stream corridor and proposed southeast of Wake County Park than the previous designated and protective route and whereas numerous Wake County homeowners and landowners have relied upon the protective corridor route which is designated as orange for many years as they have made investment decisions. Now therefore be it resolved that the Wake County support use of the original protective corridor designated as illustrated as orange on the North Carolina Turnpike Authority's maps as preferred choice, preferred choice for the development and construction of the triangular express southeast extension adopted this date, October 18, 2010. Please understand the board of commissioners support the orange corridor, the original site. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Gray Singleton member of the Town Council here in Garner:

I'm Gray Singleton, a member of the Town Council here in Garner. I thank all of you for coming tonight. I hope that everyone when they speak will be respectful of everyone else who speaks. Also, let's be respectful to the folks from the Turnpike Authority who are here. Listen to their presentation. We're all in this together. All of you have a vested interest in Garner and our community whether it's inside the town limits or not. In thinking about this process I thought of a tally sheet, taking a piece of paper and having a tally sheet, what would be the cost to the folks here? The cost of 524 homes inside the town limits of Garner that would be taken away. Over 400 homes outside the county, a thousand families would lose not only their house but their homes. What would be the cost of that? What would be the cost of the town losing White Deer Park, Bryan Nature Park and thirty-five other acres we hadn't developed yet? What would be the cost for the town to lose that? What would be the cost to people losing their jobs and this corridor going through the Greenfield Parkway down near the intersection of I-40 and Highway 70, our major industrial corridor that we hope to recruit companies to come here in the next few years to bring jobs? What would be the cost to our tax base? If you take 524 homes off the tax base in the town plus the undeveloped property plus the industrial property, it would obliterate our tax base. It would have a tremendous impact on the Town of Garner that it would take decades for us to recover from, losing that much tax base. That's just inside the town limits of Garner, doesn't include what's outside the county. If you add that up plus the fact that a sense of community. How can you put a price on the sense of community? You can't. So if you add that up and you get to the bottom line, it's priceless. It's priceless and you cannot replace that. I'm an

NC State grad and NC State fan and red's my favorite color, but on that map red is not a pretty color. **(Audience Applause)** And I also wanna note it may be hard to see but there's a pink line also. That pink line though it misses these neighborhoods, it's still takes property and goes right through the Greenfield Parkway, our industrial corridor. So the pink route both shades of red on there are not pretty to me. I ask and I leave you with this thought to be loud, be proud, but be respectful. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Buck Kennedy a member of the Town Council:

Thank you, Gray. I'm Buck Kennedy a member of the Town Council. The Town Council chose to try to keep our remarks very brief at the beginning to allow you to be able to speak and we'll have other comments later on at the end of this meeting, but we're certainly thankful and grateful for all of you that have come and taken a part of your time tonight to... and most of your evening to hear and participate in what's going on. I'd also like to thank Ms. Harris and Mr. DeWitt and other staff members that are here from the Authority that have come to listen to what we have to say. If there's someone here from the... a Board of Director from the Transit Authority, please make yourself known and we'll ask Mayor Williams to allow you to speak upfront and we would like to hear your thoughts and insights and perspective as well. As troubling and as disheartening as all of this may be, it is still a process. The meeting here tonight is a part of a process. And once all that has been spoken is heard and considered that we're saying here tonight and in other media outlets even including our own writing of letters and emails, we asking the... and our staff hands to make this recommendation to take it off the table, but we ask that their decision be timely and that this Red Route be removed from further consideration. We believe it's unfair to carry forward with such a proposition that impacts so many people and the economic well being of our town not only for today but for generations to come. There is precedent in bringing this issue to a practical resolution. To the authorities we ask you to please be as diligent about getting this Red Route off the list of alternatives as the study that went into placing it on there in the first place. And everyday that this route continues to exist it's a day that's detrimental to 26,000 people of Garner and our commercial and industrial community. Residents all of you and your neighbors are upset. Would be residents are already shunning our town. They're canceling contracts to build here in Garner. We urgently request that an end come in a very timely manner and to prevent further chaos. We'll talk later. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Phil Matthews, Wake County Commissioner Elect:

Good evening. I'm Phil Matthews, Wake County Commissioner Elect which represents the Second District. And I've had the opportunity to talk to my colleagues already on the Board and they most certainly understand the sense of urgency of trying to make this Orange Route a reality and will continue to give their support to our plight over here. But my main concern from talking to some our citizens this week and I said, you know, everything's on hold. Nobody'll do anything. We can't sell a house. We can't do this. We can't do this cause nobody knows where this road's gonna be. Our lives are on hold

over here right now. So I asked everybody we do speak respectfully and those folks that's making this decision, let's do get this red off. Let's go to orange like it was initially planned, like everybody in the entire county has made their plans to developments, to schools, the parks, our lives has been based around that Orange Route. Red needs to go away. Let's take it back to orange and I'll offer you my full support as your county commissioner and we'll make sure this thing happens. Thank you very much.

(Audience Applause)

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

I'm gonna ask Jackie Jones to make a few comments and then that will put an end to the comments from the elected officials. We'll proceed with the introductions after that, Jack.

Jackie Jones:

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. We certainly appreciate all of you for coming out and sharing on this occasion with us. I'm not going to make my speech as long as my colleagues did because they have already covered what I was gonna say. But I'd like to make a couple of things that some of you may not have thought about. In 1954 and '55, 70 highway went through Garner and that divided part of Garner. And here we are again coming back with a 540 gonna split us up again. We'll be in about four zones and not talking about the homes that they're gonna interrupt. When you look at your program down here, you'll see how many subdivisions, I think it's thirteen, that will be touched by this. And a lot of these people are senior citizens who do not want to be moved. My recommendation is to stay with the original. That will help us to be better organizing together in Garner. They said that they didn't want to interfere with something that was crawling down there in the bottom. My thing is whatever's crawling down in the bottom, they do not pay tax. **(Audience Applause)** I think it's well to protect something but I think human lives are more important than to **(Audience Applause)** and I'm quite sure by you being here tonight makes us aware that you are in support of it, but keep in mind the Town Board will not be the one to make the decision on that because if it was, we wouldn't be here tonight cause we have already supported what the original plan calls for. Again, we'd like to say we thank all of you for coming and we're sorry for the inconvenience of some of you who have not been able to get a seat or to get into the building, but maybe we'll have another meeting before this thing is decided and we can get all of you together again. Thank you and God bless all of you. And when you go home tonight just kneel down and talk to the good Master about it for a few moments. He'll work it out and please whoever you are to speak tonight, be respected **(Glitch in audio)**. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Hardin Watkins. Garner Town Manager:

We've got a few other guests. My name's Hardin Watkins. I'm Town Manager for the Town of Garner. We've got a few other guests that we wanna introduce and what I may do is just hand them the microphone and let them stand up, introduce themselves and I

have a couple of comments about some process and housekeeping and then we'll get on with our video and then our presentation from the Turnpike Authority and then give you a chance to speak.

Betty Jo Shepherd - representing United States Senator Richard Burr:

Good evening, I'm Betty Jo Shepherd and I'm here representing United States Senator Richard Burr. We had a call from some constituents who were very interested in having representation here tonight and of course Senator Burr immediately wanted someone to be here; so I am here and anyone... I'll be here for the duration... any concerns that anybody would like to speak with me about, I'll be happy to discuss it with you. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Brad Bass - Planning Director for the Town of Garner:

Good evening. My name is Brad Bass and I'm the Planning Director for the Town of Garner. I've been working closely on this matter on behalf of the Town for the last several months and I'll assure you I will continue to work closely on this matter over the next several months as well.

(Audience Applause)

Steve DeWitt -- chief engineer for the Turnpike Authority:

I'm Steve DeWitt. I'm chief engineer for the Turnpike Authority and we'll be presenting here a little bit and sharing some details with you about why we're here and what this is all about.

(Audience Applause)

I'm Jennifer Harris with the North Carolina Turnpike Authority as well.

(Audience Applause)

Hardin Watkins. Garner Town Manager:

Okay, we'll... a couple of other quick comments. Thanks everyone again as has been stated by our elected officials. Thank you for being here this evening. Thanks for taking time away from your family and things that you need to do at home. We also wanna thank our, the North Carolina Turnpike staff and they've introduced themselves for being here. There's a handful of folks in the lobby as well that didn't get introduced and I wanna thank them for being out this evening to share information with us and listen to what we have to say. Thanks to our elected officials, both our town elected officials, our county elected officials and representatives of our elected officials in Washington. Thanks to our town staff that have helped try to organize this. We have set a record, I think, in attendance at Garner Historic Auditorium. So you are a part of history for sure. Thanks for everyone for being out and thanks for our media that have decided to cover this and help us get the word out. We appreciate you all being here and sharing with us

this evening as well. One thing I do wanna mention is that if you have not signed in, if you'll please do that as you leave or if you decide to take a break during the evening, there're signup sheets in the lobby. We wanna do that to make sure a) I guess we need to keep track of how many people attended so we know what the attendance record is at the auditorium. Number two and more seriously we want to make sure to keep you informed via email messages and the like as things comes about. So if you please make sure you sign in before you leave. This is an exciting opportunity for our community to come together. It's a chance for us as a community of Garner to demonstrate that we have a lot of energy. We're interested in working together. We're united toward a common cause and that we wanna preserve our quality of life. And so we do appreciate and it's heartening to town staff that work everyday to try to improve quality of life to see so many citizens interested and concerned and we wanna try to do everything we can to help you with that. And I originally thought I would do an overview here, but maybe some of you are aware that Mr. Bruce Wittman who lives just across 401 from the Town of Garner in Brookwood Subdivision has prepared a wonderful documentary video that gives a more than adequate overview of the situation. And so I'm gonna stop with my remarks and ask Mr. Wittman to make his way up here and we're gonna let him introduce the video. But it clearly tells the story that we want to tell tonight. And he approached us. He's a volunteer, approached us and urged us to participate with him in preparing this video. And again, just so you know there are a handful of town staff here this evening. Some of us are wearing shirts that say Town of Garner, obviously have some police here and some other folks from Town Administration. If we can help you with anything this evening, please pull us to the side and let us know. And one other thing I will point out for you on the back of your agenda sheet is sort of the summary of sort of what we believe are the main reasons to oppose the Red Route. You'll see that highlighted in the video in just a moment, but also is listed is a phone number, a couple of phone numbers for the Turnpike Authority where they're receiving comments. They would like to hear from you. There's also an email address where they would like your written comments if you were interested in sharing those and there's some other resources, the town website, a link to the video, a couple of Facebook sites that are out there. The town has just launched a new Facebook site so we'd love you check that out. And Mr. Wittman has also helped set up a Facebook site for Stop the Red Route. So I wanted to let you know about that. Also one other thing, the Town of Garner has started a new public access TV channel. Maybe some of you have seen it if you have Time Warner Cable, it's on channel 11. If you have AT&T Uverse, it's on channel 99 and the documentary will be running. I think it started running this evening and it will run periodically for awhile. Also we hope that within 24 hours of tonight's meeting we will have the video feed from this meeting on the Town of Garner Channel as well. So if you wanna see it or you wanna tell friends or family members to take a look that should be running this time tomorrow and the documentary is running now on a periodic schedule. So I think that's the end of what I have to say. One other thing I do wanna remind you as we speak this evening and the Mayor will come back after the Turnpike Authority has finished with their remarks and help organize this, but basically as you come to the microphone to speak you don't have sign up in advance. We'll just try to be as orderly as we can. And if you'll come to one of the two microphones our folks in the back will make your microphone live and the mayor will call

on you to make your comments or ask your questions or whatever the case may be. So thanks again for your interest. Thanks again for your attendance. I'm going to take a seat now and hand the microphone over to Mr. Bruce Wittman and ask you to give him a round of applause.

(Audience Applause)

Bruce Wittman – Owner of Eagle Video Productions Inc:

Hey folks. I wasn't prepared to get up here. I'm used to being behind the camera. My wife said I wore the wrong color tonight, **(Laughter)** and I said well you know I wear this for three reasons, for NC State, for Carolina Hurricanes, and to get the Red Route off the list. **(Audience Applause)** I do video for a living and I felt passionate about doing something. And so my wife... I wanna recognize a couple of people here who made this video possible. I want someone to stand up. I want Martha Wittman to stand up. She's my wife. She's the one that said, Bruce you need to do a video. **(Audience Applause)** And... Yeah. And then this young man here standing behind the camera is my son. He and my other son created that Facebook page that may have got a lot of people out here today "Stop the 540 Red Corridor". That young man, you need to thank him too. **(Audience Applause)** And finally Louis Jordan up here, stand up for a second. He volunteered to help me. We all volunteered to do this but he volunteered to help me shoot this on his... We just took the day off to shoot this thing. Did a great job. And finally, I wanna thank the Mayor and Hardin Watkins and all the other folks for helping us put this together because they sent a letter on October 20 with all 7 strong points why we should be taken off the list. And we felt it got off on deaf ears. So we decided well they can't see it on paper, let's put it on a picture. So here we go. Let's roll the tape.

15 minute VIDEO TAPE----

On October 20, 2010 the Town of Garner, North Carolina sent a five page letter to the North Carolina Turnpike Authority outlining 7 major reasons why the Red Corridor should be removed from further study. Obviously, the letter wasn't enough.

Title: Town of Garner presents - A VISUAL LETTER to the NC Turnpike Authority

Gfx: The Red Route is extremely detrimental to current and future parks and recreation facilities in the Town of Garner.

I'm in White Deer Park, Garner's premier nature center park, LEED certified, it's 96 total acres. There are greenways. There are walking trails. There are picnic shelters. There's something for everybody in this park. Down through this park the northern portion of this park and virtually take out this park and all of our greenway.

From a staff point of view we've had to look at the environmental side of this as well and we've come up with a long list of parks and town facilities that are greatly impacted by this in a negative fashion.

Some of the parks that are gonna be lost the White Deer... White Deer Park and particularly the nature center is gonna be impacted and injured by the park which is just unfathomable to us in that we've dedicated an entire park to preserving nature, environmental education, that sort of thing. The George Bryan Nature Park which is a preserve of land that's gonna be completely obliterated, 100 percent by this Red Route. The Timber Drive property the Town purchased that's either intended to be for a community center or for an aquatic center will be impacted such that that property will no longer be usable for that site. The YMCA of the Triangle has purchased property on Aversboro Road for a future YMCA. That site would also be obliterated by the Red Route. And then finally what just really gets us is the South Garner Greenway which has been planned and funded and designed and should be constructed in the next 6 to 9 months will be completely wiped out and mowed over by the road if the Red Route is pursued. So that's hard for us to believe. So I think if you wanna look at it this way that environmentally clearly the Red Route is the wrong choice.

Gfx: The Red Route will disrupt long-range and orderly growth in areas designated for future development by the Town's Comprehensive Growth Plan.

With me today is the bible for future growth and future planning for the Town of Garner. The comprehensive growth plan was adopted in 2006. We update this every 15 years. Spelled out in this document is the way and manner and zoning in which the land in Garner should be developed in an orderly fashion. If the Red Route is built we may as well take this bible for future growth and throw it out the window.

I think we're incredibly disappointed, again, on the growth side of things. Our comprehensive growth plan has been in place for a number of years. This is this Red Route is incredibly detrimental to that. We've made significant infrastructure investments and planning decisions based on the understanding of the protected route which we're calling the Orange Route here. We spent over **(AUDIO GLITCH)** sewer lines to get ready to develop in our future growth area. And not just the Town but many, many people, property owners have made investment decisions based on the location of the Orange Route in the protected corridor and all of a sudden this Red Route's thrown on us at the last minute.

Gfx: The Red Route severely damages Garner's primary industrial recruitment area - Greenfield South Business Park

Well, you know, one of the reasons we picked this park to put our business is cause we knew there'd be a lot of other commercial businesses around and we not only rely on individuals who purchase cars, but businesses too. And it affects the tax value. It affects the money that comes into the county or into Garner. And you know there's gotta be a better alternative.

The Red Route is gonna be hugely detrimental to our primary industrial recruitment area particularly Greenfield South Business Park. We're gonna lose probably as many as 26 lots in that park representing about \$30 million in tax investment. There are prospects

that will be affected. There are current tenants that will be affected. There are folks that are currently under construction with projects that'll be... that are gonna be impacted. We're are just gonna see a demise of one of our most important industrial areas in Town.

I'm in Greenfield South Business Park, the home of Pergo Flooring. Pergo located in Garner several years ago because of availability of the land and the affordability of the land. If that Red Route is allowed to be built, it will take out in this business park a total of about 26 lots which have a tax value of \$30 million. So it is important that we do not allow this Red Route to be built.

Gfx: The Red Corridor splits and disconnects the Town of Garner --AGAIN.

Another troublesome aspect of the Red Route is that it splits the town in two again. In the 1950's when Highway 70 was built through Garner we were split. And you see our traditional old downtown area and then where a lot of our residential area was included here and those areas got split apart. As you can see the Red Route here will split the town in two once again and that's just not something that we can afford to have happen to our community. We'd like folks to give deference to our long range planning and again push this road further south as the original corridor called for and let the town grow towards the new road instead of being split in half by the new road.

I'm on Highway 70. During the early '50's the Federal Government decided we needed a road through Garner. So the Feds funded a road through Garner. Highway 70 was built and as a result of Highway 70 being built, the Town of Garner was split into two towns, virtually and old Garner and a new Garner. The proposal, the Red proposal through the Turnpike Authority will do that same thing, it will essentially cut Garner into two towns. It's been done one time. We don't need it to happen again.

Gfx: The Red Corridor will negatively impact water quality at Lake Benson.

This is Lake Benson a drinking water supply and also part of the critical watershed area. The construction of the Red Route will lead to sedimentation and construction runoff eventually ending up in our water supply. So we don't want the water supply contaminated. Our citizens are conscious of the water supply and we don't want it contaminated. So we don't need the Red Route to be built.

We believe this newly proposed corridor will create major negative water quality impacts to Lake Benson. As you can see here Lake Benson is very close to the proposed new Red Route. City of Raleigh Utilities Department has just built a \$90 million brand new state of the art water treatment plant just on the edge of Lake Benson. That's the major water supply for all of the Garner area and also all of downtown Raleigh. We believe that spills that may happen during the construction of this road. We believe that sediment from the construction of the road. We believe that future chemical spills once the road is open could cause major negative problems for water quality for all of Garner and all of downtown Raleigh.

Gfx: The Red Route will have significant and direct impacts on thirteen Garner neighborhoods.

I'm at the Village of Aversboro just off Aversboro Road. This is a 55+ retirement community where people come to retire. It is one of thirteen neighborhoods that will be impacted if the Red Route is allowed to be built. There are plans for future development. The plans have already been approved by the Town of Garner. The groundbreaking has taken place.

You can see where the ground is being cleared. They're ready to develop. If the Red Route cuts through this subdivision, it will virtually destroy the planning.

I've been living Heather Hills since 1975. We've had a great living life right here in Heather Hills. Well, the first time I heard about the Red Route I was disturbed. It would be inconsistent with people's lives and the way our livelihood is carried. I believe in progress but not progress to inconvenience people's lives. On behalf of the 13 neighborhoods affected by this corridor, get it off the map now!

I'm real strong about staying our... **(AUDIO GLITCH)** I wouldn't I had no idea where we would go. I don't want to go anywhere except stay here forever.

So tell me about living next door..

To my daughter? Well I'm, I was thrilled to death when she wanted to move next door to us. And again it would be the worse thing in the world if we had to move. There would be a lot of families out here uprooted from their children cause a lot of the children when they moved off, they came back to this neighborhood and built. So it would just be terrible.

So where would you and Jerry go if you had to move?

I have no idea where we would go. I would be... I just couldn't stand it. I just really couldn't and it would just be hearbreaking for me and Jerry.

Gfx: The Red Route and the recent issue of the Dwarf Wedge Mussel

Here I am in the Clayton Bypass. During the construction process of the Clayton Bypass there was concern over an endangered species, the dwarf wedge mussel. That is part of the reason the Red Route is proposed. Along the protected route if they found a way to deal with it at the Clayton Bypass, we suggest they find a way to deal with it with the protective route which has already been approved for many years.

I think one of the questions that's come to us is, what about people's rights and the importance of the people here in Garner versus the mussels that we found in the area?

Certainly at the Town of Garner we respect endangered species and appreciate the value, the value of endangered species. One of the things we all know here at the Town of Garner we just spent \$4.2 million on a brand new nature park, and environmental education center at White Deer Park. You know, and so we certainly are committed to the environment. We know there are lots of smart people. **(AUDIO GLITCH)** Folks figured out how to design the Clayton Bypass and work around the mussels in the area and protect those species. We also understand **(AUDIO GLITCH)** and folks were able to work around the endangered that were impacted by some new roadways there in Charlotte. Back when the Clayton Bypass was being planned the town amended its development regulations to help mitigate some of the issues around the mussels that were affecting the Clayton Bypass. And certainly those things should still be in place and will help in this scenario we would think. I would also say the Town's willing to commit and dedicate educational space at White Deer Park to help educate people about the value of mussels, about the value of endangered species and certainly be willing to do that going forward.

I think it's a dying shame to live in a country like we do, the United States is the best country in the world, and they our government thinks the mussels are more important than a human being. I don't care if they are on the endangered species list our government should think and consider people instead of mussels.

Gfx: Closing remarks from concerned citizens

When I first saw the map and saw the Red Route on there and people were upset about it I wasn't too upset because I thought there's no way this is a serious consideration. 'Cause I looked at it and it was so absurd it's like it's almost as if they had chosen what is the most destructive way you could come into Garner and split the Town up. Well one is you find what is the area of projected growth. One that's been there's an investment in the planning and infrastructure. Well draw a red line through that. The other is look at the parks and the greenlands and draw a line through those and in the process you take out more than 500 houses. It's almost like they found this is a way that we could most be divisive and destructive to the Town of Garner. So I wasn't real concerned about it until I heard there were only two options left and that was one of the options and I thought well gosh maybe this is a serious consideration as absurd as it looks.

You know as a developer of the Village at Aversboro this certainly has a financial impact on me and the builders we've put in place here and realtor team. But more importantly we have a group of seniors here, over sixty that have moved in already with the confidence that they are buying their final home. And they're being put through an emotional stressful period of their life when they don't deserve this. And that sometimes is bigger than the financial impact that I'm living with.

You know, thousands of families in Garner are impacted by this. Thousands of families are going to be displaced and have to find new homes. We've got millions in investment that would be lost. We have millions of dollars in tax investment and tax base for the Town that would be lost. All of that is basically for what we think maybe seven mussels

and the bottom line here at the Town of Garner we believe that people are more important than mussels.

If they decide to come through our neighborhood, I think that they owe us the dignity and they should let us know what they're going to do as soon as they can so we won't have to wait until 2012 to wonder where we're gonna be next year.

Over one thousand families will be impacted if the Red Route is allowed to be built, so make no mistake about it, we want the Red Route off and we don't wanna wait till 2012.

So folks have asked what should we do. What is the call to action? What should we do to try to preserve the great community that we have here in Garner? We're gonna ask folks to get in touch with folks at North Carolina Turnpike Authority? There is a hotline. A number will be provided to everyone. There's also an email address to where you can send comments to the Turnpike Authority officials. There's some Facebook sites **(AUDIO GLITCH)** and move forward with that. Again, just get the word out, talk to folks and let's see if we can beat this one back like we just have been successful in our other efforts here in Garner.

Gfx: Closing remarks from concerned citizens

I thought well gosh maybe this is a serious consideration as absurd as it looks.

All of that is basically for what we think maybe seven mussels.

Our government thinks the mussels are more important than a human being.

Get it off the map now!

To make no mistake about it we want the Red Route off and we don't wanna wait til 2012.

They should let us know what they're going to do as soon as they can so we won't have to wait until 2012 to wonder where we're gonna be next year.

There's gotta be a better alternative.

On behalf of the thirteen neighborhoods in the Garner area and Garner and the Garner area that are affected by this, we want this Red Route taken off NOW!!!

Special Thanks to:

RONNIE WILLIAMS
Mayor of Garner

HARDIN WATKINS
Garner Town Manager

RICK MERCIER
Public Information Officer

NEAL PADGETT
Garner Chamber of Commerce

BARRY DRIVER
Capital Chrysler Jeep Dodge

DWIGHT RODGERS
Heather Hills Subdivision

BRENDA & JERRY SUMNER
Brookwood Subdivision

DOUGLAS BALL
Developer - Village at Aversboro

Special thanks for support

BRUCE WITTMAN
Executive Producer

Eagle Video Productions

ROWELL GORMON
Narrator
Voices2Go

Original Documentary Concept
MARTHA WITTMAN

“Stop the 540 Red Corridor”
FACEBOOK Page
ANDY WITTMAN
SCOTT WITTMAN

LOUIS JORDAN
MTS SENSORS
Volunteer Producer

PHIL JEFFREYS
Consultant

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Mayor Ronnie Williams:

You may be seated. Or you can stand up again and do it at the same time if you want to. I wanna first thank these people who are standing up. (inaudible) Thank you for being here. Thank you for standing up for Garner. xxxx documentary

I was shouting at the peak of my voice, I guess. Well, one was on I-40 and I almost got run over one time. **(Audience Laughter)** and one was on US-70 and the same thing almost happened. plus if you notice my hair spray broke. **(Audience Laughter)** I want to mention Council Member Behringer and Council Member Marshburn. They had a trip planned. Council Member Marshburn's got a new grandbaby in Colorado and Council Member Behringer couldn't be with us tonight. She's on a trip just celebrating her anniversary, her and Jeff. At this time the Turnpike Authority people will come and make their presentation. Steve DeWitt and Jennifer Harris. Give 'em a round of applause.

(Audience Applause)

Steve DeWitt -- chief engineer for the Turnpike Authority:

Good evening. I've got a PowerPoint presentation here which will be my notes and I do not want to have my back to you, so I'm gonna stand over here a little bit and make sure I'm talking to you. **(Audience Laughter)** Okay? We... we really do appreciate the opportunity to be here tonight. This meeting was put together by your town and they asked us to come and we gratefully are here. This is extremely important to us. It's more important to you. This is your community and I am a part of this community. It's important to me. The video we just saw was extremely good and it does a great job of telling the story of the impacts that we all see as we look at this route we look at the many issues that lie within it and it helps us tremendously as we go through the technical details of what we're doing here and the background to make sure when the time comes, the Red Route does come off from consideration. So with that the gentleman's gonna help me go through this. To give you sort of a sense of what really matters when we build a road, it is a very long process as you know. There's a lot of detail here in the background and the kinds of things that we're here talking about and you're concerned about are all a part of this. We start and what has brought us here tonight are the federal and state laws that dictate, they don't ask, they dictate what we do. We've got to follow those laws and if we don't follow those laws, we get through the end of some number of years of stuff, if you will, and we get challenged and we lose and we go back to ground zero again and we have to start over and what we want to insure that we do, we do this once and I'll talk about what happened fifteen years ago in the protected corridor. We wanna make sure we're doing this once, the right way, following the law, so we don't have to come back and put anybody through this again. So it's a very important part of what we do. We then we go out, once a project has been decided that there'll be some kind of project out in an area and I'll show what we call a study area here in a minute, we go out and we count about everything you can imagine **(Audio Glitch)**. We count the linear feet of streams. We count the parks, the historical areas, the businesses. We count the dwarf wedge mussels. There aren't just seven **(Audio Glitch)** ...cases of what you might find in a stream, but regardless we go out

and we count everything that we can think of within that particular area. And then once we collect all that it really leads us to the question, what kinds of impacts will a road or any alternatives that we come up with, what kind of impacts will those have? So what matters? People. You matter more than anything. We don't build a road for dwarf wedge mussels. We don't build a road for anything other than people and we **(Audience Applause)** we are obligated. I'm here as a representative of the Department of Transportation. I'm here as a representative of the Turnpike Authority. And we've been asked by the people of North Carolina through the General Assembly to do what we do and that's what we do. This is not one of the more pleasant parts of what we do. We're not here to anger people. We're here to help you and I know that may seem a bit contradictory to what you're seeing. People matter more than anything **(Audio Glitch)** ...or to meet the need of an area in terms of making sure that you can get from work to home to church to stores to do the things that you want to do without it hurting your quality of life and you're here tonight because you're concerned that this is going to hurt your quality of life and we'll talk about that. Businesses, businesses matter tremendously. You heard the mayor in the video talk about potential impacts on the business park and the developer talk about the development he's working on. All those matter. And behind the business is people, is people just like you. Community character. This community's got great character. I've been part of this community for over twenty years. The community is not just the people but it certainly starts there. It is the churches. It's the things that you do together. It's how you come together when there's something that affects your community. That's all part of the character of what we look at. Environmental concerns. We know those. Wetlands and streams and dwarf wedge mussels. All that is part of what we have to look at. And then lastly but sort of wrapped up in all this are what are the desires of the community? And we talk about this southeast part of 540. We heard the people in Holly Springs. We heard others concerned about the corridors. We heard you too. It's not that we didn't hear you. We heard you loud and clear. We hear you again tonight. But we've got to do what we're doing. Again, I'll touch on that and a little more reason about why we're doing it and then how hopefully we'll get through this pretty rapidly.

In March of 2010 we picked up and started working pretty hard on this project. This, this thing that looks like sort of an outline of a kidney up here is what we call the project study area and inside that is where we do this what I talked about counting. This is the area that we go out and count the homes and businesses and all those elements. You see that Orange Corridor on there. This is the Corridor that's been protected since the mid 1990's and again we'll talk about that some more. We hear this a lot and there's a lot of confusion about what happened when this corridor was protected fifteen years ago. What are we doing now and why are we doing this again? We did this once. Well we didn't really quite do this to the same depth back in the mid 1990's, right, wrong or indifferent, it wasn't done the same way. The Corridor was placed under protection through a process that we legally have here of course in this State. Back then we used sound engineering judgment. We went out and did some of the same kinds of things that we're doing now. We did the counting if you will, but not in the same level of detail and to the same depth. And most importantly what happened in the mid 1990's was not under the legal framework of what we call "the National Environmental Policy Act" or

NEPA as it's well known. We've got to follow NEPA. We've got to follow that federal law to make sure that we're doing all the things that law dictates us to do so when we get to the end, we don't have a problem and have to start all over again. That NEPA framework if you will, that legal framework, was not part of the original process that protected the corridor in the mid 1990's. But it's very important I think for all of you to appreciate the logic that was used back in the mid 1990's to protect that corridor still applies today. The logic they used. The way they set those alignments. The way the road went, this way if you will, was all based on theoretically the same thing we're doing now. So we're going back through that, but we are obligated to look at every reasonable alternative to that. We can't just say, that road was picked fifteen years ago, we can put a road there. We've got to look at widening existing roads. We've gotta look at other alternates and that's all part of what we're doing.

So in September 2010 you saw this. And this shows those other alternatives that I talked about. You see the protective corridor in Orange. You see the Red Route. You see the Purple and the Blue and so on and so forth. All of the routes came again from engineering judgment on a best fit if you will through a variety of issues again the homes and the businesses and the wetlands and so on. And a very important part of this is sitting down with our environmental agency partners who are with us in this. But they have laws and rules they have to follow just like we do and so we look at all the different alternatives and we do what we call screen them out. We screen them out based on logic, technical detail, existence of mussels or nonexistence of mussels and all the kinds of things that you can imagine that we think about with a road like this. And this is where the red appeared for the first time and this was back in some workshops we held locally about two months ago.

So where did this Red Corridor come from. It sort of to some people it sort of fell out of the sky and it came about two months ago very, very surprising obviously for a lot of folks. You know where it is. I won't go any..through any of that detail, but there are two main elements to this that our environmental agency partners felt were important. Number one, it's a shorter route than the Orange and it's shorter by three, three and a half miles, give or take, and that's, you know, from Point A to Point B, Point A to Point B, if you will. So a shorter route logically would imply that there's less natural, key word, natural impacts, natural environmental impacts on a shorter route. So they said well look at a shorter route. See if you can reduce the overall wetland stream etc. impacts with another route. The other part and maybe the most important part of this is the existence or the potential existence of the this endangered species that we call a dwarf wedge mussel within the Swift Creek Watershed, Lake Wheeler, Swift Creek runs down to Lake Benson. Swift Creek continues to go. All of that is the Swift Creek Watershed and there are mussels we know down south of Lake Benson. We don't know whether they exist between Lake Benson and Lake Wheeler. They might or they might not. The existence of them means something. The nonexistence of them, if we don't find any, doesn't necessarily mean that's where the Red Route should go. The Mayor addressed Clayton Bypass. We did a lot as a department to address the dwarf wedge mussel as part of that. All of those options are open to us or at least most of those options are open to us as we look and continue this process with this particular project. So in

November as you know we we took some of those colored lines off the map so to speak west of where you are and also the Orange Route, I'm sorry, the Yellow Route that was around the interchange of the Clayton Bypass. Again you see the Red. We added the Tan Route and this is where we are today as we continue to do that technical investigation in the background to come to wherever we'll be with that final route.

So the Red Corridor, what impacts does it have? It may it may avoid impacts of the dwarf wedge mussel but two important, really important parts of this, it has much, much higher community impacts or there are much more community impacts where the Red as you well know than the protected corridor, what we call the Orange. The other part of this is the farther south you go we believe the transportation system is enhanced by a road that's south of Garner not cutting necessarily through Garner, but we've gotta go through the analysis of what we do to look at that and that's part of the evidence, if you will, that we're building to help show that the Red Route probably is not the best route for this road.

So what are we doing about it? We're working very hard in the background. We understand and appreciate not just the desire but the need for this community to know where this road goes. It's a problem for you. It's a problem for us but more importantly those of you that lie under that corridor or that proposed corridor I'm sure you're staying awake at night, you're worrying about the future. That matters to us. It really does. And we're trying to do all we can to get that route off off the consideration as soon as we can. What we're doing in the background as you saw in the paper this weekend, we're out doing dwarf wedge mussel surveys literally in the creek looking for these little creatures that live right below the mud. We're doing continuous evaluations of community impacts. We're look to trav.. travel benefits as I mentioned of the Red versus the Orange and out of that comes this this thing called an alternatives report and what that alternatives report is it's the documentation of all the things that we've done to show which route makes the most sense based on all of the many issues that we find that lie within any of of the xxxx routes. So what are the next steps. We expect to finish these studies by the end of December. At the latest it will be in January. You can see all this information. We're as transparent as we know how to be. It's all on our website as soon as it's available. It's all there or will be there for you to read. Our environmental agency partners certainly will get a part of this or get copies of this as we go through this and the basis, bottom line here, basis for recommending the Red Route to be eliminated from further consideration comes from this thing that we call the alternatives report and we're in January or February, hopefully January, but January or February of next year we'll have all of those details together and we'll be able to hopefully very rapidly deal with the Red Route issue.

Why is this important? I'm not here to give you a lesson about the dwarf wedge mussel, but it is a federally endangered species. That gives it certain protections. Again back to the issue of the law and legal framework we're working under we're got to look at certain things to make sure we know what exists, what doesn't exist, and can we deal with that in some way that doesn't greatly negatively affect that. The existence of these things mean something as it relates to water quality. If they exist water quality typically

is good. If you don't find them in a habitat where they should have been means there's problems with the water quality. So our project schedule, our alternatives report that I mentioned again is that documentation. All we're doing here in the next month of so is is doing December the possible elimination of additional routes in early 2011 and again January we hope could be February. And you can see the rest of this these details and I won't go through those.

We very, very much want to hear all of your comments. We're listening attentatively tonight. I don't know if this is being transcribed or recorded. We'd love to have a copy of it. If I could ask a favor if when you come to the microphone if you would give your name and your address; that helps us as part of our documented record as part of this project, to know who you are, what your comments are, and, again, it helps build a case for why you're here and it's really important to us. So we appreciate your time and I'll turn the microphone back over to Mayor Williams.

(clapping)

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

I'm gonna ask Jeff Swain to start making his way toward the stage. Okay, after Jeff speaks, we will we will begin the process of hearing from you guys. I will call on you. Make your way to one of the mics in the center aisle and I will call on you at the appropriate time after Jeff speaks. Lot of enthusiasm..after Jeff speaks. Thank you Dwight.

As you speak we ask that you be courteous to our guests cause they are guests visiting in Garner tonight. Try to limit your comments to three minutes. Avoid being repetitive. If you've with a group, try to get a spokesperson for that particular group and be respectful of others. Only come to the microphone one time. Thank you. Jeff.

Jeff Swain:

Thank you, Mr. Mayor. I guess I'm here because I have a lot of time while I'm retired to use my email system so I've been commenting to folks at the Turnpike Authority and and here our town officials and I do appreciate the opportunity to speak tonight and particularly thank the Town of Garner and I think our standing ovation on their video says it all there and appreciate the Turnpike Authority folks for being here as well. And I would add that on Monday morning, I along with about seventy-five or almost a hundred of my neighbors at the Village of Aversboro also had a two=hour meeting with Turnpike Authority folks and their consultants from from Lockner Engineering who are doing a lot of the background work for the Turnpike Authority and I wanna thank Fonville-Morrissey, our realtors. You heard from Douglas Ball, our developer, and we have four builders at the Village of Aversboro and they're all doing a terrific job in in developing the village and have are also doing a terrific job in advocating for us at this point. As the Mayor indicated I'm Jeff Swain and my wife, Nancy and I, moved to the Village of Aversboro into Garner in June of 2009. We live at 263 Shady Hollow Lane at the Village and of course as you've heard on the video and you'll hear from probably many of my neighbors, we are a 55+ community which is very rare to find in this Wake County or in

this region and we all love where we live. And certainly none of us want to move. I should add I'm not a newcomer to North Carolina entirely although we moved from New York State after many years of my career there because back in the late sixties I attended UNC Chapel Hill. I know that's, you know, over to the west and not everybody recognizes that, but I attended their graduate program in city and regional planning and then both my wife and I went onto very lengthy careers in New York State in government service. So, in particular I bring at least some perspective to to this process. As Councilman Buck Kennedy said it is a process and you heard that also from Mr. DeWitt and some of my remarks do have to do with the process. So, shock and surprise, I think that's already been noted enough except to say that, you know, September we got the map and I think Neal Padgett in the video said it best, it all looked very absurd to us and so you, you know, you go through the motions and we made comments by email which we were told to do. And in in addition to that we at the Village through through our realtors had requested the Turnpike Authority to meet with us in October and as I understand it they declined to meet with us at the time, but we were also told that October 22 was the deadline for comments. Clearly that's not the case. So, in my view all due respect to the process we have to follow now, the process I think has been somewhat flawed to the disadvantage of the Town of Garner at this point, particularly because I found on the Internet and I don't know how many others have seen this, there was a meeting that was reported by the Fuquay-Varina independent newspaper, there was a meeting approximately, I guess, around October 20 where it was said that two hundred people or so attended. It also indicated that there'd been a promise made that that something along the removal of some of these routes would be a decision would be made by the end of November. I don't know of anyone in the Village at Aversboro who knew that there was gonna be a decision in November because I don't think any of the emails informed us of that fact, yet it was in that newspaper which unfortunately I don't think we saw until it was too late. So clearly great surprise when we read the paper on the morning of November 5. How is it possible that that kind of decision could be made less than two weeks after the comment period. Less than two weeks or just about two weeks after the Town of Garner had authored that five-page letter. Why do I go through all of this because it is old news but as we go forward I think the Turnpike Authority particularly owes the Town of Garner and our residents the due respect that apparently they didn't give us before now. And I think it adds (clapping) to the responsibility..it adds to their responsibility to to remove that Red Route and as we've said remove it now. Frankly, to me it seems like the Turnpike Authority knew in September what they were going to do leastwise how could they have made the decision so quickly after a comment period to remove one of the critical routes and in fact I submit that if you assume that in the end and I think, I think Mr. DeWitt was was was helpful to us to say that they hope and everybody wants the Red Route removed but why not have removed the Red Route before the Blue, Purple because you're gonna end up having to deal with the mussels through some process like they did at Swift Creek. And clearly, the Red Route creates far more harm to the community, to people, to business, quality of life than probably the Blue Purple Route so why and why would they wait until now to start to put together their alternative reports because there should have been some documentation available to us to show how we got here without the Blue/Purple Route. Nevertheless, as as Mr.

DeWitt said we hope that this thing will come to a conclusion rapidly and like in the next two to three months. I will add just a couple of things that I think should be on the public record since we were told them on Monday morning. We do understand there are additional studies going on, but in fact the Red Route is still there because at least as far as they know it avoids the mussels. My point of view is you know you're gonna have to deal with the mussels eventually so why, why didn't you take us off first, but that's water over the dam. We are told as has been said that these studies will be done by the end of the year and I think our focus of attention ought to be to see that in fact those studies are completed on time and that we do indeed see that alternative report as soon as it's available and that we have access to it before any decisions are reached so we can understand what the analysis and comparisons look like and we also we also should be informed ahead of time of technical advisory committee meeting which will be held at some point we were told in that January/February timeframe. Those meetings we were told are open to the public although the public is not permitted to speak but I believe and I can be corrected by the officials here but I believe that it was at one of those advisory committee meetings in late October or early November where this decision to remove the Blue/Purple Route was indeed made and yet we didn't know that it was that was going to happen at that point in time. So we need to be vigilant over the next two to three months, keep close tabs on on these studies being completed, and make our presence know in whatever way we can going forward from tonight. And I think as I said the Garner video says it all and I'm sure there are, you know, easily more than a hundred people that wanna follow me in speaking tonight who will share their concerns about the harm than can be done to the Town of Garner and that we do deserve due respect for the high quality of life we now all enjoy and for the sound planning and development decisions this town has done over the past fifteen years. Thank you very much.

(clapping)

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

The first time I met Jeff he told me he was from the South. I said you don't sound like it. He said he was from southern New York. Mr. Rogers.

How's everyone tonight? My name is **Dwight Rogers**. I stay at 100 Queensboro Court in Heather Hills and my main concern, you gave a beautiful briefing of the progress that you want to make in the future, but my concern is these people that are here tonight live and breathe just like you do and you know I keep hearing on your agenda up here you said that, you know, people was your one of your major situations here and I saw dwarf mussels on this script that you have five times. One time I saw people up there. And my concern is, you know, I believe in progress just like anybody else, but they're these are human "muscles" that you're dealing with in this audience and these people's lives (clapping) so those are considerations you need to make xxxx when you make your kinda decision on this turnpike and I thank you.

(clapping)

Okay, we're gonna xxxx Miss Todd. That's the former town manager, Miss Todd.

Mary Lou Todd, I live at 132 Luxorwind Drive. Needless to say I was quite surprised that when we looked on the maps my subdivision was significantly involved in Red Route or "Root" whichever you wanna say. I worked for the town for thirty-six and a half years. I know the importance of planning. I know what the town does with the plans once they're approved by DOT and the powers that be and City of Raleigh and wherever else they have to look at them. We have to plan around those roadways. There is no way that the developers of the thirteen subdivisions that are gonna be affected by the Red Route would have built where they are had there been any indication that there was gonna be a major roadway coming through there. Now we went through the process of this planning and evaluation for Timber Drive Extension. I know how long those plans and that evaluation can take. The citizens of the Town of Garner do not need to be split apart. The Town does not need to be destroyed and the people in this audience do not need to wait four months, eight months, twelve months, fifteen months for people to discuss a mussel. I am sure that it is evident how much care the town has taken to honor and respect environmental protection. We have some of the best regulations on the books to protect streamways. We were ahead of a lot of the requirements that came down to us from the State to have to do. We were protecting more land around the streams than we were required to protect. We've done the same thing with the roadways. Look at the parks and the investments in open space that the Town has. I know three limits is my limit so I'll I'll wrap it up. I don't think that the people here will spend a very good Thanksgiving or Christmas if they think that the mussel is more important than they and their livelihoods and the homes that they have taken their time and energies to build and put their love into. I just ask that the quicker you can make the decision, the better. If the mussel is there, to let us know whether we got good water or bad water. I'm sure there are other ways for us to determine that. Thank you.

(clapping)

Bill Bingham, 2505 Craven Ridge in Dunhaven. First of all I'd like to at least mention that although we're not one of the thirteen directly impacted, our neighborhood in Dunhaven is very close to this propose corridor and we feel very strongly as others do. We only have three minutes. I'd like to take a little bit of my three minutes and ask Mr. DeWitt in the News and Observer in November 5th when they announced that the Blue and Purple Corridors were now off the table, you said that that was because you had heard loud and clear that they were no longer options. A question I would have for you, Sir, is if you'd like more volume here, tell us and we'll see if we can produce volume, but more seriously are there other things since that seemed to happen very quickly and in your presentation, I couldn't quite follow why they had disappeared. I'd like to take a little of my time and ask you to maybe tell us a little more about what happened there. It might be helpful to us. Thank you.

(clapping)

Steve Dewitt:

I'd be glad to do so. This really boils down to the desire by our environmental agency partners to insure that we've treated an endangered species with sensitivity and the endangered species issue does not exist or did not exist in the Blue Corridor or the Purple Corridor and there was some comment about a predetermined decision. We did not make that decision. All these decisions were made at the same time in a meeting we had with the environmental agencies. We took the position that we wanted to remove the Blue. We wanted to remove the Purple. We wanted to remove the Red and the Yellow. And as we talked through all these, they agreed Blue, yes, sure; Purple, okay; Yellow, okay; not the Red just yet because of the existence or potential existence of that dwarf wedge mussel and to insure that we dealt with it technically within the law and with sensitivity to the endangered species act and that may be contradictory to what people think about the people act if you will, but we have to fo..we have to follow that. We have no choice and that's the reason the Red Route today is still on the drawing.

Thank you for your response and I would just like to reiterate as everyone else has that we hope within the question of impact on Corridor you are placing people as well as mussels in the context.

Absolutely. Thank you.

(clapping)

Mr. Jackson.

My name is **Jimmy Jackson**. I live at 2015 Navan Lane right off Lake Benson. I'm also president of the Lake Moor Homeowners Association which is a hundred and forty-nine families. I also I'm kinda unique. I have a daughter that's an environmental biologist, very..she's very much aware of the mussel problem. I notice on your original plan which was a good plan in 1990 and that didn't happen overnight. That took several years to come into being, but you left..there's a thousand-foot buffer every time it crosses water in that original plan if your webpage is right. What kills mussels is sediment. It would be very easy to expand the area around where it crosses the waterway to stop the sediment from occurring, according to my daughter, I'm not..it's been a long time since I had biology, that is done rather frequently. That's one of the solutions. I understand that the legal requirements in dealing with the federal government. I'm kind of a part-time lobbyist and have been at the federal and state level, and I understand that or what have you, but it was a good plan in 1990. A lot of families and people in this room have planned their lives around how that was supposed to be and I would be less than candid if not saying that to come up with this plan at the eleventh hour if I didn't resent the hell out of it.

(clapping)

And to upset retired people and people that have worked all their lives to build their homes, I realize you all didn't come up with that but that is just unacceptable and it's irrational and I'm actually an old retired druggist and whoever really came up with that

plan we've got a number of good drug stores in this town (laughter) and I can name you even though I haven't practiced in a lot of years I can name you a lot of good drugs that they obviously need. Thank you.

(clapping)

26:00 (COULD NOT HEAR THIS)

My name's **Elizabeth Nichols** and I'm from 2806 Cascade Place which is also in Dun Haven. I'm also faculty at NC State in the Department of Forestry and Environmental Resources in the College of Natural Resources and I have some background xxxx mussels. When I looked at this plan I too thought it was absurd because one important component that I don't see that's being discussed here is this is a major transportation highway that's gonna generate air pollution and I was surprised that we were placing something of that statue so close to not one but three elementary schools because sensitive populations in the human and I'm really an environmental ecological xxxx toxicologist, but the sensitive populations in the population of Garner are young children and older adults and my question is if this were to happen, would those schools be moved because particularly Timber Elementary is going to be right up against this major transportation corridor. And what's the long term impact both as taxes and health benefits for having that come through. So I understand the process. I understand NEPA. I understand the endangered species act and I look forward to reviewing the technical environmental documents that are coming forth. But to me this is a slightly focused environmental assessment and it doesn't actually encompass the entire environmental impact for Garner for its population and and for Benson Lake. It's a drinking water supply and not only will the construction contribute problems to Benson Lake which is xxxx surface runoff is always gonna be a problem for xxxx. There's already a lake that's in good condition with regards to water quality. My last comment which is my own professional opinion and is kind of ironic is I think you have a mussel population below Swift Creek because we have these two reservoirs, Lake Wheeler and Lake Benson and they pull out pollutants and that's why you have these things these mussel populations surviving below us and it's ironic that it's sorta coming back to bite us in that sense.

(clapping)

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I was the environmental officer for the Division, very familiar with the NEPA process, dealt with it every single day. My main concern here is the resulting impacts to forestry from the mussel from the protection measures that have taken place on other projects and will surely take place here. During the '90s and 2000 I was totally involved in two projects involving the mussel. One was the Buckhorn Reservoir Expansion Project in Wilson County and the Ten Mile US-70 Clayton Bypass, key federal agencies to include EPA, US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Army Corp of Engineers, either stated or implied that forestry activities were impacted by the mussel. During '97 the US Army Corp of Engineers in their March 10th '97 Record of Decision for the Buck Horn reservoir expansion City of Wilson made the following comments under State and local agencies. The North Carolina Division of Forest Resources has expressed concern regarding the

loss of available timber production within the project area and the enhancement techniques which are proposed. It is recognized that preservation will remove land from timber production but xxxx by forestry activities in other areas. In October of '97 I sent the Corp of Engineers a letter requesting that they provide us the data and the documentation was impacting the dwarf wedge mussel. Thirteen years later I'm still waiting for this data. (clapping) And the reason that I believe that I do not have the data is because that none exists. During March of 2005 I made a presentation to the Johnson County Board of Commissioners Public Hearing recommending that they not approve the hundred-foot no touch buffer along the US-70 Clayton Bypass; however, a four to three vote established a hundred foot buffer anyway restricting totally all forestry activities. Therefore no matter what you choose to do you need to make sure that recommended BMP forestry practices to include timber cutting be impacted as little as possible as a result of this proposed road project no matter where the location you pick. Thank you.

(clapping)

Good evening, my name is **Patrice Johnson**. My address is 118 in Garner. I moved to Garner a few years ago after very, very tight due diligence to insure my kids would have a very quality education and I don't see that anywhere on your plans. I hear people. I hear mussels. But I don't hear our children and our children are our future. And I think it's gonna really disrupt a lot of homes and the lives of our younger working class citizens if our children have to be uprooted and moved out to go to another school and I don't think that that's something that's being considered at all and I think that you all should really look at when you say people and I know that you're just here to be the voice, but I really, really think that you really need to consider people because as said before all we keep hearing is dwarf mussel, dwarf mussel. Was this not on the itinerary or something that you could have seen years ago because I did my due diligence prior to moving to Garner and I saw nothing coming my way. And my children are really adversely impacted by what could happen in the next two years. And as I say yes we can stand here as adults, but we have got to understand that without our children having very prosperous futures or us setting them up for success we have no future. So not only are you disrupting the lives of those retirees that have spent their whole livelihood working trying to have a decent place to retire and be at peace, you're now disrupting working class citizens who have children who are negatively impacted as well. And to put our lives on hold and for my children not to know, for me not to know where they're gonna be bussed within the next two years is absurd. So I like a lot of the other folks in here really want you to pay attention to this Route and understand wholeheartedly that if it were you, how would you feel if it was coming through..a bulldozer was coming through home after you've only been there a short time after doing careful due diligence research. I would not have chosen this this home had I not done my research the way I had. And this was a three-year project for me. So for me to find out now within the last couple of months that this is something that's going to negatively impact my household is disheartening and I know that like I said you're just a voice to come out here and present to us but you all think it's really something to share but you really need to take a deep dive and for those who are not here showing their

face tonight with you, please have them understand that I strongly believe that they need to start looking at things from a perspective not only from an environmental perspective but when you say people truly truly mean people. Look at it if it were you. Put the shoe on the other foot and carefully do your research and I would pray that upon doing so that you remove this Red Route.

(clapping)

Hi, I'm **Tom TeBo**. I live at 106 Twin Berry Lane in Everwood Subdivision. I just want to bring upfront that there are thirteen developments that are gonna be hurt. There's gonna be people that are gonna be affected by this financially. The next generation's gonna be affected by this financially. You're looking at moving costs when when NCDOT comes in and takes these properties they're gonna do an assessment, a tax assessment of these properties. It's gonna be lower than what these people paid. It's gonna hurt our friends and neighbors. You're killing the town with this proposal but it's gonna hurt people, our friends, our neighbors, our children, our grandchildren who are gonna have a less financial stance than what we have. You look at the neighborhoods that are running adjacent to this route. Not the ones the thirteen being affected, Dunhaven, South Creek, Everwood, Fox Haven, xxxx Valley, Summers Walk was mentioned, Lakemoor, all these properties are gonna lose value. All the all the families like xxxx in this room, my wife and I, a lot of couples have worked hard all their lives, have planned around the Orange Corridor, bought our homes, our dream homes and now we're gonna lose anywhere from twenty to eighty thousand dollars of equity in our homes. Who wants to live next to a six lane divided toll road. Who's gonna buy my house when I wanna move and and retire. Not to mention the people that have already retired that are gonna be displaced. You know, I moved here in '94 and these are my friends and neighbors xxxx Mr. DeWitt please help me, help us. Don't hurt my friends and neighbors, please. Thank you.

(clapping)

?????

xxxx Garner Road just down the street but more importantly I just moved my mother here from Kentucky. She moved into her brand new home at Heather Ridge in August and we just found out a couple of weeks ago that her home would be demolished under the Red Route plan. I've been hearing a lot of talk about mussels and people. I'm an animal activist. I'm not gonna argue about mussels. What I wanna know is most of these decisions come down to money. I'm looking at the routes. I can see that Red Route is shorter than the Orange Route. It would cost a lot less money and it was my understanding that the mussels become more of an issue if we apply for federal funding for this project, that if we pay for it ourselves, there's a little more wiggle room on the mussels was my understanding, so what I'm asking and I think what everyone here's asking you know we're middle class people. I've been unemployed for a year. I mean we're doing the best we can here. What am I gonna tell my mother. She can't sleep at night. She just got here to retire. How do we make this about people and not just about money and I would appreciate your help with that. Thank you.

(clapping)

Good evening, my name is **Michael Taylor**. I live at 1601 Woods Creek Drive, the Heather Ridge Subdivision. (clapping) My wife and I have lived in our home for seventeen years. A lot of our neighbors are here tonight. I was kind of curious to look at your photographic map out there to realize that the center of 540 or the Red Route goes directly over my home. Now not only, you know, of course therefore I'm impacted and like the gentleman before me spoke corresponding our surrounding neighborhoods are also impacted. Their property values go down and I'm beginning to feel like an endangered species I'm a taxpayer. I've never..I've heard this happening in California and Tennessee, the snail darter and some little stupid ass excuse my language mouse in California that, you know, all these people get concerned about. I never thought that a by-valve would be more important than a bi-ped and go back to the Orange Route. Get rid of the Red Route and all of us can sleep at night and these five hundred folks won't be emailing you every day, calling you and all this kind of stuff, but I thank you all for coming out here tonight and and bringing both points of view but please understand that this would adversely affect our town. This is a great town. We don't wanna be the biggest one in North Carolina. We don't wanna be the busiest one in North Carolina. What we are is a great community that has everything you need to raise a family. We have good schools, good neighbors, great government and one thing the politicians always say they always wanna leave a town or whatever, you know, better than they found it. Well this wouldn't leave it better than you found it. Thank you.

(clapping)

My name is **Melody Secrest**. I live at 242 Waterville St. I have a Raleigh address but I do live in the city limits of Garner. I am a representative of the homeowners board that represents seven hundred families that live in Eagle Ridge Subdivision. We were slated with the Orange Corridor to have easy access to the Orange Corridor. That was one of the things that helped our development to have the number of homes that it has. We would not border the Red Corridor in not a good way. We..even though it doesn't come through us I just wanna be sure that it's not just the people who will lose their homes and their businesses but those of us that skirt that Red Corridor will also be affected. I lived in an area outside of Atlanta, Georgia back in the '70s and I-20 came through our community. That community never recovered. Our houses plummeted and the bus..we didn't just have an old and a new cause I-20 was a lot bigger than 70. The 540 Corridor will literally destroy Garner. Garner has been not looked upon in Wake County as the most desirable place to live and it is a good place to live if you come here and check us out. (clapping) I would highly recommend it. We have had to deal with Garner not being considered important enough to keep a library and we had to fight for that. We need to make sure now that people understand that we wanna keep our homes and our businesses and our schools in tact for Wake County.

(clapping)

Good evening. My name is **Daniel Sanders**. I'm the **Pastor of the Springfield Baptist Church on Auburn-Knightdale Road** and (clapping) even though we are not located specifically in the town limits of Garner we represent over five-hundred families many of which are residents of Garner. I grew up in Garner. I graduated from Garner Senior High School and many of our constituents are part of the Garner residents. When you look at the corridor, the Red Corridor and the reason why Springfield is so concerned, one is because of so many of our families within our congregation are going to be impacted. Two, when you look at where the corridor comes off of the Green Corridor, it comes particularly right over Springfield Baptist Church. Springfield Baptist Church has almost two-thousand members. We represent over five hundred families. If this corridor were to come through as it is slated, it would not cause a minor disruption, we would literally lose all of our property which is some fifty acres of land. We would literally have to relocate to another location. You spoke of the fact that community character involves the religious arena. Well we represent that part of that religious character, that community character. Springfield Baptist Church is one hundred and forty-four years old. It becomes the most preposterous thing in my thinking to see a staple of our community and yes we are a part of the Garner community by virtue of so many of us interacting in Garner, living in Garner. We join with Garner, with the Mayor, and all others in this effort to remove the Red Corridor from consideration for the very character of Garner and our community. We are one community that continues to stand and try to represent the highest quality of living to represent it so that other communities and other counties and other states even can see that there's still some people somewhere who still believe in living a decent life. These kind of things destroy the very fabric of what makes us the kind of great people we know that we are. It is our pray. It is our concern that this Red Corridor be looked at more seriously to see that the impact that it has so drastically and adversely affect the wellbeing of this community. What..how will we explain this in history when we dared to save a mussel and annihilated a community.

(clapping)

My name is **Russ Owen**. I live at 326 Easy Wind Lane in the Village. I'd like to take a different look at this and say --what is the impact along the Orange Route if you build the Red Route? A road needs to accomplish something. It needs to help people get to places. It needs to assist in getting around something or getting to something and in Garner we have lots of roads and lots of ways to get into Raleigh and up to RTP and out to the airport and here there and everywhere. We don't need 540 but there may be an awful lot of people who need to be served farther down along the Orange Route and if you take this Red path you've taken that away from them and then those people are still not served and you've got to come back and build another road for them. So we don't need the road here and they may need the road there and I think if you look at the viability of building this road and would it be economically sound, the extra cost for all the acquisitions, the lack of need for it, so the lack of use of it, does the Red Route become an option that shouldn't be built even if the Orange Route can't be used because the dwarf wedge mussel and the snail darter and maybe we'll find something else down there and the Orange Route has gotta come off the table, but that doesn't

man the Red Route should then be used unless it also serves a need that we need to fill and the Red Route does not serve a need we need to fill. We don't need to bypass anything. We're right where we need to be. Thanks.

(clapping)

I'm **Kathy Imbriani**. We live at 104 Falling Creek Court in Forest (glitch). We have a hundred homes in our community most of which will be demolished because we lie directly under the Red Route. We are bracketed by two waterways. One of which is Mahlers Creek which supplies the water source for the wetlands of which Bryan Road Nature Park is part of. It's my understanding tonight speaking with some of the people here with the environmental company that these wetlands have not been surveyed for the dwarf wedge mussel. From reading that I have done on this mussel it appears to me that the habitat in Mahlers Creek is conducive for this mussel to be there. All of these wetlands eventually drain into Swift Creek so they're all part of the same water system. I would like to know if these wetlands which lie directly under this Red Route are going to be surveyed for the presence of that mussel before you make the decision to eliminate the Orange Route and go with the Red Route to bypass the mussel.

Steve DeWitt:

Yes ma'am. We're currently surveying those as we speak, I mean not right now, but during the day, yes, we're doing that.

My name is **Steven Miller**. I live at 1213 Adrian Court in Heather Woods. Sorry I'm not a very good speaker but when I moved up here about nine years ago, I moved up to Raleigh to go school and work. I lived in Wilmington and I got accustomed to the small town, wanted to move to the where there is work and but I didn't wanna live in a big city. When I looked this wasn't there. 540 was going south. I intentionally didn't move to north Raleigh because of 540 coming through, not wanting to be near that. Garner's a wonderful town. We first moved here to Aversboro. My wife we lived there right next to the library. It's wonderful to be able to walk around. We decided to have a child and we moved down to Heatherwoods. It's nice to be able to walk in parks, to go walk to the corner store and I look forward to in ten years to see my son go and do that. With the Red Routing path I will be sending my son on a bicycle across either a bridge or underneath or around highway 50 interchange to get somewhere on a six land road. People planned ahead of time for the route to be there. It was planned there twenty years ago. We're looking at five years from now breaking ground. Now the company I work for we keep planning and scheduling and to be honest if you're failing to plan you're planning to fail. This showed up on August. We were not made aware of it in our neighborhood until Sunday. Now I've heard that they're suppose to send out flyers and people are supposed to be notified. I didn't find them. I never saw them. We ended up printing up flyers and passing them around our neighborhood. xxxx. But this seems I..I understand the need for the xxxx to avoid mussels. I understand EPA stepping in and saying you need to find an alternate path but on such a short notice shoving it there and then putting your decision dates a few months after adding that route and not giving the

community time to adjust to even really consider it seems very shortsighted and I just apologize for that. I wish there was a way it could be different.

(clapping)

Yes, my name is **Bill Buffalo**. I live at 1800 Buffalo Road. I was born about a hundred yards from here, attended the school for twelve years. I know I don't look that old. (laughter) Ted xxxx is in that same class. He's just as old back there and I have to tell you that when 70 Highway was built, there were people then that said it's too close to Garner. It's not gonna be a transportation route. It's gonna be city, stop lights all the way to Raleigh and that's exactly what's happening and as far as the zoning I was on the town board when we passed the first zoning ordinance and that was tough to pass cause you're essentially going to be telling people what you should and should be doing with property and I know there's a lot blood, sweat, and tears have gone into what has been done in planning this community. And to me it's a total disrespect to what all has been done to put this Red Route where it's going and I really hope you'll change that idea and and quick. Thank you very much.

(clapping)

My name is **Harry Bagwell**. I live at 1836 Benson Road. I'm the guy that flies around Garner, does the little loop de loops and I got the little grass airstrip right there that that Red Route comes through and you know I saw that in Sunday's paper and I have never thought that that was a serious route. And I got in my little airplane Sunday and I headed south to 42. And you know I looked at thousands and thousands of houses between my little runway and 42 and every morning and every afternoon I know for a fact that 50 Highway is bumper to bumper. Highway 40 to the east is bumper to bumper. 401 is bumper to bumper. The one to the..I just lost my train of thought..the one..Old Stage Road is bumper to bumper and why would you run a Red Route through a town and bypass thousands of homes to the south that needs that needs that highway. (clapping) I mean it's..only the government could do that.

(clapping)

My name is **Wendy Offerman**. I think it's 478 Easy Wind Lane. We moved in Monday. Closed on our house last June. There was no talk of this at all. We moved in this past Monday. I just wanna know should I go home and keep unpacking or should we pack up and go back? I... we moved here... my husband retired last Friday and I moved here with my 83 year old mother to live in a peaceful, quiet town from New York, to get away from New York. And all... and THIS type of thing. Now I'd like to think that this was the welcoming party for me, **(Audience Applause)** but... I really... I'm not interested in moving and living in a place where I'm going to have to start fighting from day 2. Please remove the Red Route.

(Audience Applause)

Good evening. My name is **Jeff Denny**. I live at 103 Old Field Lane. You said something and we sort of sort of skipped over it and that was “the road has to make sense” from a transportation perspective. And it’s clear that it makes sense further south. And it will be a toll road. So we have to figure out, the State of North Carolina, the Turnpike Authority has to figure out how this thing’s gonna be paid for. The what is it? The western extension or whatever it is down at Holly Springs is being paid for through bonds and that bond is being repaid through tolls. So we have to figure out how we can most effectively repay those bonds so that we can get a lower interest rate so this thing doesn’t cost tens of millions, hundreds of millions of dollars more over the thirty or twenty years that it’s gonna be financed. So that that’s the first thing. And then next thing is my house is not gonna be destroyed. Thank goodness. I feel horrible. I can’t imagine what folks must feel for for those whose homes might be destroyed. One thing though, I did spend fifteen years and I currently in economic development, I understand the value of industrial recruitment. I understand when Mayor Williams was right next to Pergo, that facility will be wiped out. Everything I think if we’re looking at Mayor Williams everything to his right would have been wiped out. That’s a \$23 million dollar plant that employs 300 people, probably make I don’t know \$40-\$50,000 a year. So we have to think about that facility those 400 people making the \$50,000 a year. We have to think about all of the other 26 lots that could be the next Pergo, that could be the next Fidelity Data Center that we almost got \$50 million investment that would go a long way in in adding to our tax base. Each and every one of these \$130 million that we’ve talked about I mean we’ve thrown around massive numbers; that tax value would all of a sudden become public, therefore non taxable, therefore no longer in in our revenue. I think it represents something in the neighborhood of 7 or 8% of Garner’s ad valorem taxes every year would be gone. And that’s, you know, unacceptable. Thank you very much.

(Audience Applause)

Hello, my name’s **Ed Brown** and I live in a suburb of Garner, Raleigh, right down the road and... at 3207 Milton Road in Raleigh. And I work for Carolantic Realty. And we’re the marketing agent for the vacant land in Greenfield Business Park. And I’ve had the good fortune of being able to work for the sellers and with the Town of Garner in recruiting industry to Greenfield. And I’ve I’ve been working on the site probably for about 6 or 7 years and quite frankly it’s it’s been slow up until the past year, year and a half. Even during the recession we have just started to get some traction, just started to get some activity in the park. We’ve recently sold the site to Pensky, a Fortune 100 company. They’re under construction. The Red Route, the Pink Route goes right through the middle of their facility. We almost got Fidelity Investments, the largest mutual fund company in the world. And we’ve got just a host of other prospects. The reason I’ve been waiting to get up here and talk I’ve been trying to get in touch with the person who’s representing a company who has about 15 acres under contract in Greenfield South to find out what the magnitude of employment and tax value is. And he sent an email back to me just a few minutes ago that the company is expecting to hire 250 people and they project the tax value to be \$10 million. The Red Route and the Pink Route clips their building. And I ask that the Turnpike consider making a decision

as quickly as possible. The “unknown” is gonna hurt the opportunity to bring commerce to Garner. The unknown of when the decisions are gonna be made. But most importantly I’d I’d ask that you eliminate the Pink Route and the Red Route so we can continue to recruit business into Greenfield Park. If... if the road goes through the park we’re gonna lose the lion share of the good developable land and Garner, the community, will lose an opportunity to recruit new industry to to the town. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

My name is **Terry Stanfield**. I live at 310 Summers Walk. And if the Red goes through at best my house is not gonna be destroyed but I will be sitting on my deck eating hamburgers waving at the people going down the toll road, because I’m gonna be like right there staring at them. Hi. And my wife and I bought our house about 4 years ago and we finally moved in this spring after our children were... all our kids were out, empty nesters, Lake Benson, the Park, you know, the Deerfield... White Deer Park. We were excited. It’s all my wife could talk about for 3 years was getting down here. Won’t it be great?! Won’t it be great?! And now we’re here! This is one of the bests kept secrets in North Carolina. It is fantastic. **(Audience Applause)** My question is, my question really is as I’m sitting there eating my hamburger, staring at this toll road, and those of us who are left, how are we gonna pay for that road because I don’t know any one in Garner who’s gonna take it.

(Audience Applause)

My name is **Ray Cornett**. I live in Van Story Hills, 507 November Street. Lived there for going on 33 years. I would like to ask representatives of the Town of Garner if the Red Route is picked what legal action we can take against the Department of Transportation and the environmental groups? Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Hardin Watkins:

I’ll answer that. I’ve anticipated your question. **(Audience laughter)**. I’ve also added up the numbers of dollars of tax base that we will lose and it approaches a half a billion dollars. And I think we could risk a little bit of what we’re about to lose to fight the Red Route that’s coming through town **(Audience Applause)** And I think you’ll back us.

(Audience Applause)

Good afternoon. My name is **Chris Bridges**. I stay at 111 Saddle Ridge Court, Garner, North Carolina and I stay in the Forest sub- **(Audio Glitch)** of my home and then you go down the street to Auburn-Knightdale Road and you destroy the best church in the world with the best pastor and the best people at Springfield Baptist Church. Will you uproot my nephew that is laying in the ground over there? What are you going to do for me? And then what are you going... who’s gonna pay for my moving costs? Because I think if you’re gonna uproot me that’s one thing that you should have to do for me. You

should pay for my moving costs. You should help me... you should pay for my gas cause I'm gonna have to drive around to ten different subdivisions to decide can I afford to live here? Can I get his house here? And no I'm not a rich person which I think has a lot to do with some of the routes that you've already alleviated **(Audience Applause)** because some of those people have a lot of money and a lot of influence. So what are you gonna do for me? What are you going to tell me when you destroy my house and then turn around and destroy the place where I go to keep to keep my sanity and to get my religion? What are you gonna do for me? And then I want to know who on this commission is gonna pay for all of our moving costs. Because if you are gonna destroy my house, you need at least help me find somewhere to go and give me the value that I paid for my house not what you think it is worth.

(Audience Applause)

I'm **Archie Cowan**. I'm at 603 Tiffany Circle. I'm another one of those who'd be sitting on my deck waving at the people going by. I... I've been a naturalist, a scientist since I was six years old. I've had an interest in science. I taught science and was a science educator for 30 years in the public schools of North Carolina. I understand the importance of the mussel. If it weren't important to the ecology, it wouldn't be there and we need to protect it. However, we've already heard that it was protected in other road projects and there's no reason to believe that it can't be protected in these. Now we heard in the newspaper... we read in the newspaper that the trans... the Authority heard loud and clear from the Holly Springs residents that they were opposed to those routes and as a result those routes were dropped. We need to make sure we're heard loud and clear too. But in the interest of being fair, I'd like to ask everyone in this room who thinks the Red Route is a good alternative, stand up and yell I love the Red Route right now. Go ahead... everybody... if you... **(AUDIO GLITCH) (Audience: NO RED ROUTE!)** ...No Red Route. I'm sorry. Orange Route (We know what you mean by that). I believe that was loud and clear.

Good evening. My name is **Scott Taylor**. I live at 156 Gussett Drive. I am also one of these people who, depending on the map I've looked at, would be waving at the highway. I live in Vandora... Vandora Pines **(Audience Applause)** I don't know... is there anybody here from there? Okay, I didn't hear anybody before. **(Audience Applause)** I've lived there for the last 5 years and I keep looking at this map and I realize there's one thing missing from this and that is where the 440 lies. It's just what five not ten minutes drive away. Who's gonna pay to **rode (sic)** on this road if you can drive up to the 40 and run for free? How you gonna pay for this thing if nobody's gonna take it. Everybody else is beating the dead horse. But that's a question I haven't heard asked yet so... thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Good evening, I'm **Melissa Oliver** and I'm representing the YMCA of Garner. Obviously, from your statements earlier you all know that the proposed Red Route goes through the YMCA property where we have hopes for a facility one day. But really more

importantly the YMCA's about strengthening community. And we see this Red Route as dividing a wonderful community and many neighborhoods that we serve. And so we feel like if this Red Route was to happen, it would really impede what the YMCA does and would prevent us from helping the people that we... that need us the most. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

I'm **Jerry Dolaner**. I own a house at 608 Chapwith in Garner. I don't live there. I live in North Raleigh near the other end of 540. And I remember when it was built. Neighborhoods that existed had to have noise barriers based on the decibel levels and distances. And so I'm just wondering what that highways gonna look like being so close to residences with a twelve-foot wall on either side really cutting Garner in half. Is that under consideration? The noise barriers? The other... before... you can answer after I've finished. **(Audience Laughter)** The other thing... the other thing, you know, it's... I think everybody is just incredulous... just... I just can't believe that this route got out of your meeting as a viable alternative. You mentioned earlier that "people first" and that you had to look at every reasonable alternative. Well this is not reasonable. I just don't know how you thought it was.

(Audience Applause)

I'm gonna ask Phil Jeffries to stand up.

Phil: I am standing up.

(Audience Laughter)

I wanted to remind you Phil, 3 minutes.

Phil Jeffries – former Wake County Commissioner – resident of Brookwood:

I will. I'll take about 3 like the guy down there in the other project did. Anyway, you know, we... we necessarily we we just don't look at things right. We only think about things that's gonna generally affect us. And I live in Brookwood at 2701 Brookwood Drive about near 36 years. I'm 73 years old. I was born in Wake County. I spent 30 years with a mailman and to my much regret I put in a lot of years working with Ronnie. **(Audience Laughter)** But I don't think... I don't think we really looked at everything. And our neighborhood which is Brookwood, since the immediate eighties out of pocket money fighting stuff... we spent \$45,000. And without any help from any community. Nobody else helped us. And we believe it or not we won every time. And that's the most important part. **(Audio Glitch)** ...when I was a county commissioner 2005 they went down there and if the guy didn't lie to me, one man found none and the other one found one and that was when they had started working on Clayton Bypass and I believe one of the building contractors down there was trying to get something moved around too so he could build some houses on it. And Garner is it's it's a good place. The people are good. But the person that just asked how we gonna back up to 40? That's actually... that's a good question. How are we gonna get up there? Are we gonna drive up there or what? I talked to the gentleman on the other Turnpike part of it when they, Mr. Johnson,

when they were talking about... just before I said just 40 open the one up going to Holly Springs and they said they gonna get a lot of people that's gonna come in from Jordan Lake. And I asked him I said I don't really understand that. I said you know if you're at Jordan Lake and you come on in 64, you know, towards where the toll road gonna be at, you got two roads that you can turn off that are free, you know, Farrington and all that? You can just turn off and go right on to Chapel Hill and Durham, any place you want to go and I'm not sure that people give a lot of thought to which way the road's gonna go and what it's gonna cost each person to do it. They had to have a... I had somebody tell me yesterday said that he road the Turnpike and he didn't, he didn't pay anything. I said the first of the month aint here yet. You aint got the picture where they gotcha gotcha on on the camera so you gonna you gonna have to pay for it then. But don't ever give the hell up. Never! Never! Never! Keep right on and if there's anything I can do for ya'll I promise you that I'll do it.

(Audience Applause)

Good evening. My name is **Robert Silver**. I live at 109 Easten Court in Tiffany Woods. My backyard fence is the city limits and the Red Route goes right over my neighbor in the back and right behind my fence. I have some very elementary questions. I think other people might benefit from the answer. First of all this Turnpike Authority makes the final decision on this, is this correct? On the selection of the route?

Steve DeWitt:

Actually the final decision is made by by us. We're accountable and the federal highway administration working with our environmental agency partners, but the final decision is ours.

Robert Silver:

All right, now this is a committee or a board?

Steve DeWitt:

It's not a board. It's not a political decision. It is a decision made on the technical details of what we talked about.

Robert Silver: I understand. But how many people are on this decision committee or whatever you want to call it?

Steve DeWitt:

There's 5 or 6 of us.

Robert Silver: 5 or 6 of you. Okay, and are these- are you appointed by someone? How did this board come... .

Steve DeWitt: We're obligated with the positions we have with the State of North Carolina to do what we do.

Robert Silver: Were you elected or... .

Steve DeWitt: No sir, I'm a professional engineer by... I've been...

Robert Silver: So you were selected then by the State from the ranks of their employee... .

Steve DeWitt: Yes.

Robert Silver: Okay. And finally of these 6 people how many are present here tonight?

Steve DeWitt: There's several... there's several ladies here that were part of that process, the Federal Highway Administration, I do not think is here.

Robert Silver: Okay, but I'm talking about of the ones who will make the decision, how many are here tonight?

Steve DeWitt: There's Jennifer Harris with the Turnpike Authority works with me. Christy Shumate is part of our team. She works for the consulting engineer that work with us and been very involved in the project. There's a couple other of our consultants partners that'll that'll be part of that.

Robert Silver: So they are here...

Steve DeWitt: In essence we're here yes.

Robert Silver: My concern is there're gonna be a lot of other people who might not... .

Steve DeWitt: No. No we're hearing every... **(Audience Glitch)** ...we're listening and we are it. Yes. Yes sir.

Robert Silver: Okay, thank you.

Okay.

(Audience Applause)

My name's **Sam E. Thompson**. I live at 600 Thompson Road, Garner address; but I'm in the county. The Breezeway Subdivision that will be impacted if this Red Road comes through was built on land that my granddaddy and brothers help clear back in the early 1900's which is probably immaterial, but I was the first grandchild to build on the Thompson property in 1966. There's not any of this land from Old Stage Road to Highway 50 that I haven't walked and hunted on during my lifetime with my father. And you're gonna destroy a lot of what people have moved here from different states to Garner and there's still some developable land left in the area with all the support that

has been done by the parks and stuff. I don't plan to be cooking steaks. Some of the other people said hamburger, but I like to cook ribeye steaks occasionally (**Audience Laughter**) and the expressway will get the back edge of my property. Get my brother's house. And there's two or three maps and all of 'em are different. I called last week. I found out about this deal two weeks ago from the newspaper. And some of the neighbors in Breezeway got to kidding what're gonna do when they come through your field? I said I aint planning on it. But, the Expressway needs to go back to the original Orange Route. I recall very well when that started many years ago. We owned property, we, my wife, from Thompson Road, we owned land on Old Stage Road that cloverleaf or what you call it will take the rest of that usable land. The rest of it is swamp. It'll also take commercial tract where Food Lion was gonna build years ago, but they didn't. Thank you. I'd like to see the Red Route go and the Orange Route as the lady printed and distributed in the neighborhood, there's a lot of these here tonight and (**Audience Applause**) save a lot of tax dollars. Thank you.

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

Let me ask the people on stage. Do any of ya'll want to make a comment?

This Red Route will affect a lot of children that practice on these fields and use these parks. If you hadn't seen these parks in action on the weekends, White Deer Park is packed with folks using the picnic shelters, the... all the things the Town designed it to do. There's a lot of practice facilities that probably over a thousand children use the... as we work with other organizations trying to keep kids off the street and do something positive. Cause these kids do come back to this town to leave. They'll come back in the future and live here and make homes here and join their families and then you look at that also cause there's a lot... there's a future here and then these kids will come back and make this part of the future in their home in later in life.

But your question is that if the parks are taken, what will we do? We don't know.

Mr. Manager, do you know what we could do? We'd have to start over, wouldn't we?

Yes sir.

My name is **Mark Massey**. I'm... I live at 10724 Mary Lou Lane down in the area where the Orange Route would generally go and it won't affect where I live at and but the thing is I do handle a lot of youth athletics in the Town and I have worked closely with the Town officials to help develop some of these parks, facilities and try to develop for the youth and all these other people in the Town that use the walkways and stuff and we're gonna lose a lot of parklands. We're gonna cut out of stuff the Town's made a big investment to help the Town, to have somewhere where people relax when they're off work and these parks are tremendous thing. They're really good for the community and I'd just like to know what they're gonna do to help replace these if they do take it.

Well the short answer is we'd have to start over. Anybody else like to make a.. yes 'madam.

I just have a quick question. My name is **Karen Bell**. I live at 221 Widhorn in Heather Ridge and I've lived there since August and my daughter so eloquently put. But I've a financial question. If this does happen how do we find out where we go from there? My house is one that will no longer be here. What is, you know, is it tax base? One man asked what about our moving expenses? What about all of that? How do we go about finding out the logistics of the financial end of this if you take away all the emotion, what would the next step be financially for us?

Mr. DeWitt, have you dealt with this?

Steve DeWitt:

If by some chance, if by some chance the Red Route was picked, regardless whatever route is picked, if you live within the route of a road, we hire a private appraiser just like you would if you were selling a piece of property or buying a piece of property, they go out and they appraise the property given comparables in the area, fair-market value. We'd make an offer to you as that property owner of a fair-market value price. You have an option of taking that or not. We can negotiate to a degree. If we cannot come to terms with that we have condemnation rights, meaning we would file in court. And then your rights are protected through the court to come to some resolution with what is determined by the court to be fair-market value. We also pay moving expenses. We pay for relocation assistance in trying to find comparable housing for you. There's a multitude of other things that we do. But it is it is our hope and our obligation to do our best to make you whole. That's easy to say. It's not so easy to do when your home has been taken but that's the essence of it.

What kind of time limit is there? Someone else was asking about being relocated. Do you give three months? Do you give four months, six months? What happens?

Steve DeWitt:

We would give you at least ninety days. It can be longer than that.

(upset people talking)

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

Okay, we've got two more speakers. I'm gonna call on you next and then you can follow her.

All right. Good evening. My name is **Carmen Brantley**. I actually currently live on 42 West Bound which I have anxiously waiting for this Orange Route for years now as I work in RTP and it would be wonderful to have access quickly to Durham. **(Audience Applause)** Secondly, we are closing on our dream home next week which is going to be bulldozed by the Tan Route should that one also go through. So we're kinda in a real predicament. My question for you guys is I've been waiting anxiously from any one of these aspects to have a quick route to RTP and Durham. The Red Route makes absolutely no sense for those of us who live in Johnston County which you are also

forgetting a large large population of people who need access to RTP from that area. I also noticed on the map out there that you have already kind of dismissed a route that would have gone out to further east to encompass some of the people out towards 42 East and the Flowers Plantation. There's a large large population of people out there that are also going to need access. And then I've also learned that there's going to be a northern Clayton expressway built. It just seems to me that it would make more sense to widen your 540 path to encompass the 42 West 42 East people in Johnston County giving them an access to RTP to northern Raleigh quickly instead of building a road now that does not make any sense at any of the projected in my opinion other than the Orange Route. Any of the projected other things that you have going, it just seems like you need to widen that out and encompass a large base of people that you've obviously forgotten about.

(Audience Applause)

My name is **Ralph Swick**. I live at 152 Gussett in Vandora Pines. My question is on the roundabout that supposedly gonna start within the next few months or maybe next month at Vandora Springs and Buffalo Road, is that gonna be delayed now because of undecisions by the Turnpike Authority? And if it is delayed how much more is that gonna cost our city because of this delay that they've been putzing around with now? And they can make a quick decision on Holly Springs and Fuquay but for Garner now it may end up costing us maybe a couple of million dollars more because of delay of this project that was planned and supposed to start. They've already put all the the painting out there. They've already taken care of what how it's supposed to look and all this. What's the answer there?

To my knowledge there are no plans to delay the roundabout. Brad Bass you want to comment on it. Is Brad still here?

So a follow up question I have, if they don't delay it and this goes through it's a waste of money.

(Audience Applause)

That is a good question. To my knowledge there's not a delay at this time but we will have a meeting with the DOT folks next week and schedule and that topic will come up.

Yes, my name is **Barbara Watts** and my mother lives at 2809 East Garner Road and we currently own about 26 acres. And my question is would you take just what you need of the property if the road goes through that particular land or will you take all of it or how would that work?

Steve DeWitt:

Without knowing anything about your property "it depends" is the answer. If if the road goes through and leaves a small remnant of a piece of property we most likely would take the whole parcel although you as a property owner would have the option of

keeping that whatever that remainder was. If, you know, by and large we don't we don't want to take any more than we need to. We don't wanna take any more from the property owners than we need to. But we go through an evaluation of what's the value of the property before the road goes. What's the value of the property after the road is in place and there's damages in essence that are determined from that in most cases and we would negotiate with you what those damages are. We would negotiate with you how much of the property we would take or not in a case like that.

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

I'm gonna give one more call. If anybody wants to say anything. Are you in line? Well, come to the mic.

My name is **Russell Atkins**, 5819 Old Stage Road. And it's not gonna come through my house or anything but it's right, it's kinda... I live right up from Vandora Pines and I couldn't believe it when my wife told me I was coming to this meeting tonight earlier this week and I said why and she said cause there's a road going through here. I said where and she showed me. And I also own 6 acres over in Brookwood and a couple of people on the video that was done earlier are friends of mine, Mr. Summers and them. And my question for you is I've... I hunted Brookwood back with my granddad, we've had that land down there since 1972 and do ya'll realize how much wetlands is in there cause I know there's gotta be at least one or two of them muskellunge down in there cause I've walked every bit of it. **(Audience Applause)** And I can guarantee it's swampy through there and there's a lot of creeks that run in there. So I know there's at least one muskellunge down there. I think I seen one. **(Audience Laughter) (Audience Applause)**

Hi. My name is **Sally Davis**. I live in Vandora Pines Subdivision. We're about 102 houses. This proposal cuts off about half of our subdivision. It removes both entrances. What about the rest of us? You gonna drop supplies? You gonna drop food?

(Audience Applause)

My name is **Levon Ennis**. I live down at McGee's Cross Road area in Johnston County. My interest here is more or less with the old Orange Route because I have property that is adjacent to a subdivision in that area that ten years ago I had to part out for the buffer of the road that was coming through there. So I've been sitting on that property for ten years waiting for the Department of Transportation to one day buy it. And this has affected this property because it is landlocked. If you move this road and I can see where these people are coming from cause their lives are gonna be disrupted terribly and not only that those that have been planning for the old route over the years and have been making adjustments based on what they're building it's gonna affect them financially as it has me because I've got property there now that I can't get to that's no good to me or no good to anybody except the Department of Transportation to put a highway in and we've been sitting on it for ten years. And that impact is gonna have a drastic impact on those that have been planning for this for the last ten years.

(Audience Applause)

Woman with speech impediment:

I had a stroke so it's very hard to talk. Do you understand what I said? I live in Heather Woods. I have lived there for 12 years and during that time the timber of Aversboro has gotten a lot of the buildings now and have lost a lot of trees but I have noticed that the birds **(unintelligible)** I watch the birds turn to Lake Benson. And every year as the birds **(unintelligible)** ...and study this, every year as the birds are migrating they stop at Lake Benson. And I know because I have big trees in my yard and they always stop in my trees as they're migrating through. They need to look at how that route will affect the birds that migrate during the seasons. Because they definitely go to Lake Benson.

(Audience Applause)

Okay we got a guy with a mic and we're gonna hear from him and then Andy and... .

Are you going?

No you go first.

Okay. My name is **Aaron Weaker**. I live in... that's loud... South Creek. I've been here approximately 40 years, old town Garner boy. I lived in Van Story Hills, Shore Drive, Georgetown Manor. Seen a lot of changes. This isn't one that I wanna see at all. I encourage anybody in the audience to stand up. I mean they're here to listen to what you have to say. Please stand up, make yourself heard.

(Audience Applause)

Mayor, if I can. My name is **Andy Romanie**. I've lived in Wake County for about 22 years now. During that course of that time I have as the Mayor knows represented all municipalities in this State, in the State Legislator and in for a number of bodies in the State. I have dealt with the environmental laws. I have attempted to protect municipalities from the ones that we thought went too far. And there were many of them that we backed off. I believe in protecting the environment. I understand the Endangered Species Act but I will tell you from my perspective having gotten older and having retired, I looked all over Wake County because I wanted to stay here for a development and I live at 253 Easy Wind Lane in the Village of Aversboro. That was a retirement community, 55+ community, that houses that were mainly one floor and I found about three. One of them was way on the other side of the county called Carolina Preserve. I think there's at least one more and the Village of Aversboro. And I want the people that are making this decision to understand that you're gonna destroy that community. You're absolutely going to obliterate it. You're not only the houses you're gonna take but what you're going to do to it. I'm astounded at what you want to do to White Deer Park. My wife and I love the outdoors and the environment. And we love to walk. And we found that we could walk everyday through that beauty park land. And I say Mayor as long as I represented you I didn't what you had done over here until I walked around and I saw it. And I hope that you will come to some common sense here and leave this road where it belongs. I've got neighbors that are disabled. They're

elderly. Some of them aren't. But they live in that community and this is going to be the most extreme hardship I have ever seen on a group of people in my life for a decision made by government that I represented for many, many years. And sometimes I know why people don't like us. And it's for decisions like this. Now I wanna hear is there anyone in this room that wants to speak.

Hi folks. My name is **Steven xxxx**. I live at 142 xxxx Dr. in Everwood one of the housing developments xxxx impacted to my back yard. I came to Raleigh four years ago from Michigan. I love living in Garner. I want to reiterate two very important points. The first one is impact. You said you were gonna count a lot of things. In your presentation I saw you count thirteen neighborhoods that are impacted. My neighbor, Tim, listed five for six that you didn't count that are gonna be impacted permanently by reduction in home value. The ones that are not being destroyed. The ones that have it in the backyard. I am extremely concerned about that. If those of you who remember four years ago we did not have a recession. I bought my house at the peak. I've already been taking the hit in the recession. This is a permanent hit. I can't wait it out when you put a highway in my backyard with a sound barrier. So I want you to count those impacts, not just the thirteen neighborhoods getting bulldozed; the half a dozen or more the folks that don't live in neighborhoods that are gonna have to go under a bridge, have to listen to the drone of the highway at night all night long. Okay. Those are impacts. You've heard a lot about impact. The second point I want to make is you talked about timing. You skipped right over the slide. Your time line talks about studies being completed short-term, but I saw final decision being made in 2013. That is two more years of anyone who wants to move in or move out along that corridor being held hostage. That is not acceptable. **(Audience Applause)** We are in a very, very difficult economic time. How many people are worried about jobs? **(Audience Applause)** All right. If I lose my job and I have to sell my house; first, can I sell my house with that sitting up there on that map?

Audience: No, no, no.

Two, if I am able to sell it, how much of an impact financially am I gonna take? Four years ago, peak of the market, how much have I dropped already? How much am I gonna drop if I have to sell during this thing with the study? Those are two points I wanted to make. I'm very concerned about the timing. We need to expedite this decision. Remove the Red Route now.

(Audience Applause)

Hello. This too loud? My name is **Kevin Radford**. I live at 102 Wildberry Lane in Summers Walk Subdivision. I dressed for the occasion. I'm on vacation. I drove back from the beach for this. Just wanted to hear what was going on. I'm actually vice-president of the homeowners association in Summers Walk. I'm a Garner boy, grew up in Van Story Hills which my parents still live there and the road will affect them. They've been there since 1976. Went to Garner, graduated in '90. Got married. Stayed around. Bought a house out at Rock Service Station Road. Was excited about the the old route

cause we finally had a way to get to town. Still have a lot of friends down there that they don't understand the Red Route and everybody down there was looking forward to the Orange Route. Anyway, we stayed down there about ten years, saved money and bought our dream home with our three kids back in town cause I wanted to move back to Garner. We have a nice home 34- 3500 square feet. White Deer Park is adjacent to us and that's one of the reasons we bought the house. They were building the park. And you know they talk about the wetlands and environmental thing but the thing that sold the house for me was my kids. We feed like fifteen to twenty deer every night. Every morning and every afternoon we go and hand feed the deer. They come in our our backyard. People in Summers Walk and that area know that we have a big deer population and that road is coming right through my backyard. Where are the deer gonna go? Where are the animals? I mean that was a whole selling point for our whole family. The first day we come looked at our house there's deer all in the yard. There's no need for the Red Route. I've lived here my whole life, my family like I say my parents live here and I just don't understand where the Red Route come from. It just don't make any sense to me. So do away with the Red Route.

(Audience Applause)

My name is **Miles Beam**. I lived 3917 Bluff Wind Drive which is actually a Raleigh address but it's kind of at the beginning of the Red Route where it branches off from the proposed Orange Route. So the Orange Route kinda goes a half mile down behind our neighborhood but the Red Route has a nice red line drawn across my yard and takes out the last three or four houses in our neighborhood, so that's that's one of my interests in it. I did want to point out something that really hasn't been talked about a little bit. If you look at the environmental considerations of the subject that's being discussed. And environmental considerations are really what has driven us to where we are with the consideration of the Red Route. The mussel is really all that I hear is being mentioned with regards to environmental considerations that put the Red Route here. The environmental picture has to be considered in a much broader context. Some other things that have been mentioned about water quality in Lake Benson, and so forth and other wetlands, you know, there's a number of small ponds that are right in the middle of the Red Red Route. There's like at least five that I know of within two-tenths of a mile of my house. So there are a lot of broad environmental considerations. But in the even bigger picture than that, a little research on the dwarf wedge mussel will show you that the most viable population for this species is actually in the northeast and much further north of here. There are strong viable populations of the dwarf wedge mussel there. The US Fish and Wildlife Service five-year review that was done out of the New England Field Office of Concord, New Hampshire a few years ago basically stated concern about the decline of the populations in the southernmost portions of of the red... of the dwarf wedge mussels' habitat which which is right what we're talking about in North Carolina. And the the concern that I have is of the very small numbers that have been found to decimate a community for the sake of a very small declining population that there's some signs that it may not make it anyway just adds further insult to injury here. So if we do this and we find two years from now that there's no sign of the dwarf wedge mussel, a lot of people would have been injured for really no good reason. The US Fish

and Wildlife Service from what I understand is really the really the really the governing agency that has to sign off on the environmental aspects with regard to the environmental protection agency or I'm sorry with regards to the protection of the Endangered Species Act. And if they're happy with what the Turnpike Authority has done with regards to their due diligence and their actions, then, you know, they're... it's really gonna be their decision to I guess sign off on what the Turnpike Authority decides rather that's to go with the Red Route or rather that's to go with the mitigating task that will allow the protection of the environment along Swift Creek. So, you know, it it really is something that has to be taken into consideration is just a broader picture of what is the cost of saving this, you know, the small possibly declining may not be their in a few years population anyway. And I hope that the broader picture is really considered from an environmental standpoint as well as the other aspects of it. Because no matter no matter how I slice it it just doesn't make sense to do this. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Excellent. Mayor, I'm **Scott Walton**. I live at 305 Coachman Drive right down the road from you. We moved here five years ago from the Philippines and I can tell you know the EPA has done a wonderful job of protecting the environment here having lived overseas and seeing where there is no agency like this, it can get real ugly. That said I 'aint no tree hugger. I'd like to know if this whatever this mussel is if it dies and go away if it dies and goes away who really cares? That's a serious question. I mean what impact is that on us except that we have to tick off in a book, rats, there's another one gone. That's a serious question. What what difference does it really make? And then are there besides this mussel, are there any other viable reasons why this Red Route has been selected as a possible pathway with the incredible human impact that it'll have on our town? **(Audience Applause)** That is a question. So the question is who cares about the mussels? What impact will that have? W-why is this? Why are so many people considered- being considered for extreme impact in our town and our whole town as itself, why are the mussels being considered so strongly? And are there any other reasons why this Red Route was selected? And I apologize in advance if this has been covered. I couldn't get here at seven. I left for awhile. I came back.

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

It was briefly covered but I'll ask Mr. DeWitt.

Steve DeWitt:

In terms of who values the mussel there's a lot of folks that value endangered species. I won't go into all that. But it is protected by federal law, so if for no other reason than the law dictates that we try to take care of it we have to try to take care of it. As it relates to the Red Route, the Red Route primarily is still on the table because of the dwarf wedge mussel.

Scott Walton: But that is the only factor, the only reason the Red Route is being considered?

Steve DeWitt:

As I mentioned earlier it's being considered because of the dwarf wedge mussel and our environmental agency partners thought because it's a shorter route it might have less natural environmental impacts. Not human, but natural environment.

Scott Walton: So running that more south through the country would have a greater environmental impact?

Steve DeWitt:

They're arguing that a shorter route just by logic would have fewer impacts than a longer route.

Paul Capps, I live at 100 Logger Lane and I'll be quick. I know I'm at the tail end of this but I just wanted to register my comments. I'm affected in multiple ways just as many of the folks here are I'm sure. My personal home is at the intersection of Old Stage and Vandora Springs. It's a remodeled 1820's home that carries a lot of history in it and many many folks before us have gone to great strides to keep this and we would certainly like to see this continue to be there. Secondly, is I'm been a realtor here since 1993 and represent a couple of neighborhoods, the Village at Aversboro, that you've heard a lot about tonight and also Breezeway and I can tell you that we're we're getting hit. We're getting hit directly in a significant way. So I did want to let you hear that. I mean I'm living it every day. And as a matter of fact as early as yesterday a couple from Florida perhaps we lost a \$535,000 sale in Breezeway. Hopefully they will come back cause we're expecting and hoping this Red Route will be eliminated just as quick as it was put on us and and we were all blindsided by this. And the developer with millions of dollars invested, buyers, you know... where did this Red Route come from, you know? And I don't want to reiterate things that have been said that please remove this as it as it really makes to us makes no feasible practical logical sense. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

Let me thank you all for coming. I am very proud of the way we have acted tonight. Give yourselves a hand.

(Audience Applause)

Mayor Ronnie Williams:

And while we're wrapping up, give our visitors, the people from the Turnpike Authority, give them a hand.

(Audience Applause)

We are going to try to wrap up. If anybody in this audience finds they need to have another meeting please contact us and we can have another meeting. The Town

Council Members are going to make some closing remarks and the Town Manager's got a parking announcement. You got an announcement about parking.

As you depart the facilities this evening you can go out either entrance. It typically a one way in, one way out. Our police are gonna block Garner Road so try to get folks home in the best time we can. You can go out either entrance and if you parked in the rear you can exit onto Avery Street. But as you do leave you can go out either the entrance or the typical exit.

Two things in your correspondences, email, phone calls, or snail mail, no to the Red Route but also don't forget no to the Pink Route. The Pink Route will have a significant impact on the economic development of our future here in Garner. So remember, no to Red, no to Pink. Secondly the Mayor thanks you thank you for the way you conducted yourself tonight. The people are the backbone of the community and our backbone in Garner is strong, standing up straight, and our heads held up high. Thank you.

(Audience Applause)

Buck Kennedy a member of the Town Council:

You've had a couple of instances to stand up and stretch and we've lost most of the audience but I still have a few remarks to make that will exceed three minutes. I usually like to write my comments so that I... and then modify them a little bit based on what's heard in order for me to finish up in a reasonable time. So let me while I'm speaking still why don't you just stand up and stretch your legs and then when you feel like it sit back down.

While you're doing that most of you know something about my background before I was elected to the Town Board. But my career has been as a professional engineer dealing with infrastructure projects namely mostly water and wastewater and street work for local governments. And then in a consulting capacity I've actually written a number of environmental assessments myself and been witness and part of an environmental impact statement just as we are experiencing here now. Having done that and having seen what has happened with an environmental impact statement and the outcome I take this the Red Route very seriously cause I'll just give you a brief overview that we were planning a wastewater treatment plan up in Vance County and wanted the discharged to go to an open flowing stream that had the simulative capacity to handle the wastewater and it was going to be a reasonably well designed treatment plant even if we were going to design it, our firm was. But the federal government after a couple of years of studying said, no let's put that wastewater right back into Kerr Lake. And right around the bend there was already an intake where we were drinking that water. Therefore, I think we have to consider the fact that a Red Route cannot just be summarily dismissed. We have to take it seriously. But part of the environmental process talks about primary impacts and from let's look at our personal perspective on that that there are literally thousands of residents that are upset at the prospect of the state and federal government condoning such a project as this and how it will be detrimental to our town's well being. And when people are distraught, actions are not

reasonable. People get sick. They get sick mentally. They get sick physically. Productivity lags as people ponder their future. Dreams are destroyed. Our nation's credibility is shattered. Chaos is the rule rather than there being order. Looking at the financial impacts this Red Route represents right at the first cut of the 524 homes represents probably more than \$150 million worth of investment from a tax base. And it would be ripped right out. You could say well it can be transported elsewhere. How many people do you think will really want to relocate close by and call Garner home after what would happen like that? Another \$200 million in the lost tax base will be will come about as a result of depressed property values on the corridor on either side of the primary corridor. When you put both of those numbers together and we heard earlier that the Red Route is three and a half miles shorter, something that hadn't been mentioned tonight I think that the North Carolina Transit Authority projects the cost per mile at about \$50 million. \$50 million per mile. Now Timber Drive Extension was less than \$15 million per mile. But even if we go with \$50 million, 3 1/2 miles shorter times 50 is \$175 million and we're gonna lose twice that much in property value just by the just the initial primary impact of this coming through as a corridor. Now think of the time that's gonna be lost and the additional expense required to purchase all of these individual parcels. But go a little bit further and think about the time that's gonna be tied up in the courts for condemnation proceedings. It's just gonna further aggravate the folks that are here. When you stop and look at this map and look at the intersection that's gonna be created over in the industrial park, from my perspective I think that we're going to see absolutely the largest intersection in that industrial park of any intersection in all of Wake County, maybe all of North Carolina. It is a monster. Now that largest intersection and on its way is going to eliminate a coup... it's going to practically eliminate that industrial park, taking out existing industry and essentially limiting access to the other existing industry that's already in place. Now the Red Route will, the Red Route will not even connect directly to the Clayton Bypass. You would have to get onto 40 and then turnaround and go back down and pick up the Clayton Bypass. All of that creates additional further or further traffic congestion. The Red Route will cut off some of the roads and create some dead ends. I'd be one of them. Well, in addition to my house being eliminated but those folks on Thompson Road and it's not a unique situation where there's only one road that would be cut off but it's been mentioned tonight that there's several other streets that would be isolated and that's an additional cost as to how do you how do you arrange for those folks to have access and egress from their property. Looking at the environmental impacts and this is generalizing, of course, we must assume that the authorities understand that two of Garner's parks will be devastated by the Red Route and those have been documented tonight. The irony is White Deer Park, an education... an educational and environmental facility to be lost for all of the benefit it can do for one primary purpose. I think the thing that's even harder to comprehend is that we do not have the ability in Garner inside that beltway to replace or reproduce those parks. The land is not available. Those parks are gone. Gone, gone forever. You can't do it. That means that you have to travel further if we can get the next park land southeast of here, then you'll have to travel further to get to it. Then consider the Red Route will create a third Garner. You're already familiar with the two Garners, North Garner and Garner. If there's ever any doubt by anybody of what a highway can do to separate a town and to and to put it in jeopardy is to look north of Highway 70,

look in North Garner. I would I would ask you to really to do that and to to take the time and ride through some of those streets and see, talk to some of the people and see what has happened. Another item, Fire Station Number Four which is going to be dedicated and opened and going for... going to into use on December 1 is located outside, located east of 40 just off Raynor Road. Immediately, Fire Station Number Four is going to be isolated from the rest of town. It's got to cross back over to get into town. It diminishes our firefighting capability. It just seems... I don't know... I've tried to use two or three words here, ridiculous, incredible, incredulous, I'm not sure what the right one is to to pursue this much further and create this kind of consternation that we have. But I tell you every time a capital project is mentioned and we go through the NEPA process you know what's really funny? And I've been involved in a number of projects mostly across eastern North Carolina, but that dwarf wedge mussel is sighted most every place you go as being endangered. Because they find him. But he's everywhere. It seems. I have- perhaps it's more ah, it's vibrant... perhaps its life capability, life sustaining capability is more vibrant than we get it credit... than we give it credit for. I don't propose eliminating the mussel. Let's just mitigate the situation so that both of us can exist. Water Quality. Has Raleigh expressed their concern at the Red Route crossing upstream of Lake Benson. We know that the reservoir serves Garner and part of Raleigh and I heard that the narrator of the Transit Authority video correct... if I heard him correctly, the Red Route was specified for Raleigh's benefit and the name Raleigh was mentioned at least six times. Raleigh needs it, Raleigh needs it. Not one time was Garner identified as the object of the alternative route nor was there any hint not even here tonight. Now think of all air pollution and noise pollution that will be directed at the middle of a thriving community. Just come in and deposit it right in the midst of us. First there's a direct impact of all the traveling vehicles and then there's the indirect impact of the additional crosstown vehicles trying to access and get from side of town to the other. The Orange Route is already located in a rural area and the route will be buffered. Natural buffer that already exists, not manmade walls, but trees, natural, natural, natures buffer. And it's happening... it'll happen in effect through the free enterprise system. We don't have the luxury of that natural buffer. And secondary impacts will accrue there from. And speaking of those, it's no exaggeration to tell you that the Red Route will create another Garner which we've talked about and it'll suffer the same fate as North Garner when Highway 70 split us. The evidence is clear and all of this... all of the area of the same fate as Garner. Planners tell us that Garner's urban service area will more than double over the next twenty years. Our growth area is to the east and to some extent to the south, all on the outside of the Red Route. The town needs to be united in effort in order to effectively manage the challenges of this expected growth and the Red Route will not facilitate that growth and the management thereof. Think about where our administrative facilities are. They're on the inside, the north and west side. We... all of the growth will be going away from us. Take a second look at the Red Route and it actually duplicates a major portion of Timber Drive, runs right parallel with it. All of our long-term extended extensive efforts to complete the extension of Timber Drive will be diminished by an unnecessary duplicate thoroughfare. Whereas a new thoroughfare is obviously needed much further south. That is the Orange Route. Let's use our limited dollars for a needed thoroughfare where it is most useful. Let's not try to duplicate an existing route. All of the landowners of the original Orange Route have been denied the

right to develop their property. There was a gentleman here speaking about that earlier. What he didn't say is if I were one of them I would expect one of them or all of them to sue as a practical result of "inverse condemnation" of not being allowed to develop their property to its highest and best use for the past fifteen years. **(Audience Applause)** And all of that cost mind you is going to be added on to the cost of that road. As a result of the events we have vis- we have witnessed in identifying the Red Route the credibility of NEPA of the NEPA process comes into question. For fifteen years a route for I-40 or I-540 has been reserved. Fifteen years, I've heard the numbers vary some, but fifteen's pret... seems to be pretty close. Eight weeks ago the town was alerted that three more routes and I can be wrong, maybe it was four, but we were alerted that three routes were being considered, three new ones, one of them being the Red Route. Four weeks later two of the three routes were eliminated from further consideration. I don't really know how it was done. I know Mr. DeWitt gave us an explanation but still it's hard to comprehend how you can provide, how you can promote three routes and eliminate two of them all within a four week span. It's just hard to understand. We, we question... don't we have standing in this matter? All of us need to have confidence in the US Fish and Wildlife and all of the other agencies that we talk about and these recent events are simply incredulous. We need to restore some measure of credibility. Now I'm almost done. As a professional engineer I've witnessed a number of capital projects and as these capital projects have competed with the environment. And in every case the environment was protected while a rational capital project was implemented, a rational capital project was implemented. Yet many times over the past forty years I've asked myself this simple question: when will we be forced to go head to head with something like the spiny or excuse me, the dwarf wedge mussel with or any other endangered species? And it really comes down to man versus the mussel. Who will survive? We're in a sad state when it comes down to have to ask that question. Where are we on the ladder of importance? Now, up to now **(Audience Applause)** up to now the mussel by doing nothing has really been taken care of. And this is not to be belittle the mussel. Somebody is taking care of it. When do humans begin to count? How can we both be saved? I don't think there's a soul here tonight that would profess to say summarily just one for the other just out right get rid of it, care nothing about it anymore. I'm not wise enough to know exactly how you do protect him but I am aware of what what provisions have been taken by the town in recent years to protect the environment in which it thrives and as was stated by Mary Lou Todd earlier, we've taken some rather drastic measures and some effective measures. So finally it's unfair to carry forward as I've said earlier, with a proposition that impacts so many people and the economic and the economic conditions of that how it impacts the entire town not only now but for generations to come. There is precedence. Somebody mentioned it before. But there is precedent to bringing this issue to a practical resolution and the authorities to them please be as diligent about getting this Red Rou- Red Route off the list as you were on getting it on. And finally I'll repeat everyday this route continues to exist is a day that's detrimental to 26,000 people in Garner. Residents are terribly upset. Would be residents are already shunning our town, canceling contracts to build here. Let's put an end to it and let's put an end to it soon. And thank you very much for your indulgence.

(Audience Applause)

Council Member Jackie Johns:

I'm not gonna be as long winded as Buck. Onlyist thing I'm gonna say is, let's get rid of the Red Line. **(Audience Applause)** But we most certainly want to thank Mr. DeWitt for coming down and explaining to us tonight for this occasion. And I'm very proud of the way everyone is conducting here tonight and I don't think nobody has said anything out of the way to each other than we'll go home and we're gonna pray about this. But I think the organization will do what is right after hearing from all of you tonight. But one of the things I wanna ask each of you. Those little critters that they keep talking about, do they drive automobiles? **(Audience laughter)** So my reason for asking that question it seem like it's been said they think more of those critters than they do human beings. We are human and we need to take under consideration that they're not going to be extinct. They're somewhere else in the country beside here and if you continue to follow that Red Line I think that you're gonna have a problem. So please Ma'am and please Sir, we wanna say again thank you for coming tonight.

(Audience Applause)

Let us all stand for the...

Council Member Jackie Johns:

Our Father and our God we thank you for these moments that we have shared together. We pray Father that we will have more insight on what have taken place and that the decision that they will make will be the best not for them not for any personal gain but for the citizens and taxpayers of the Town of Garner and for the State of North Carolina. We pray our Father for those who have come out this way that they will find their family and their love ones doing well when they return, guide them as they go home to their love ones. Father, this is our prayer and this is our hope. Pray in Thy name. Amen.

CROWD LEAVES

NOTE: Auditorium holds approximately 471 people. Hundreds had to be turned away. 1,033 people signed the sign-in sheets.